Oh My Goddess!

ああっ女神さまっ

2

藤島康介

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Oh My Goddess! 2

ああっ女神さまっ

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DARK HORSE MANGA™

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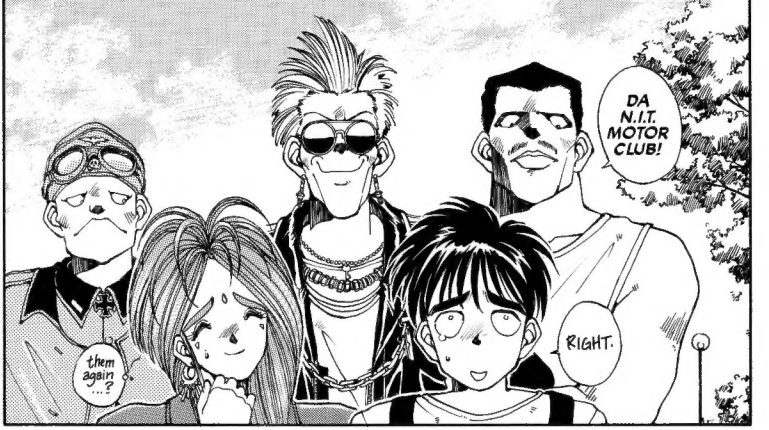
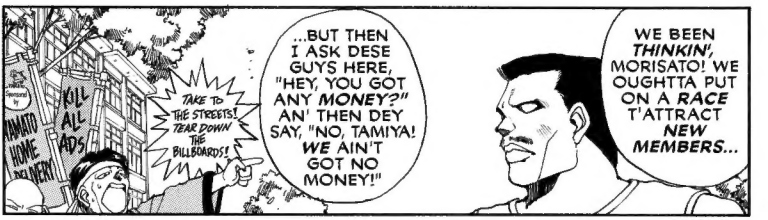
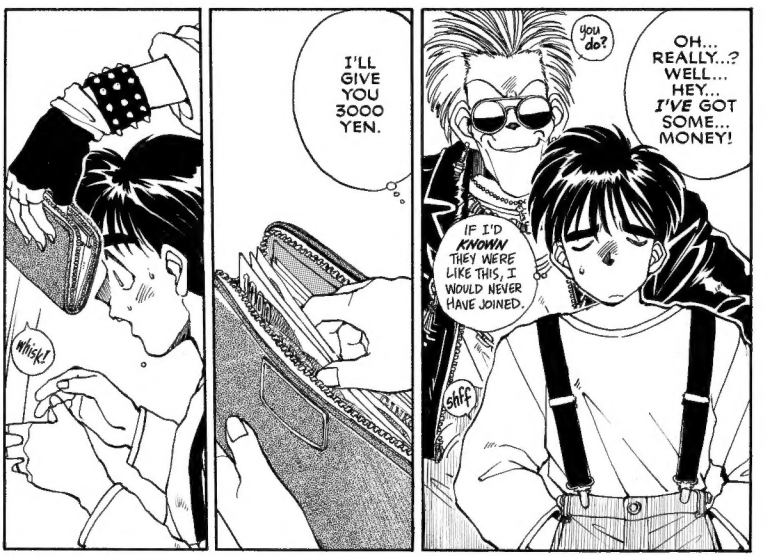
CHAPTER 10

An Honest Match

IT'S ALMOST LIKE A FESTIVAL!
GOOD-NESS! IT SEEMS LIKE EVERY CLUB IS HAVING SPECIAL "BACK TO SCHOOL" EVENTS!
BUILD THE CAMPUS REACTOR
PRO NUKES
ROW YOUR DAYS AWAY IN THE GALLEY SLAVE CLUB
PHOTO CLUB WE WELCOME FRESHMEN GIRLS!
D.O.L. STALKERS
WHICH CLUB DO YOU BELONG TO, KEIICHI?
"ART" CLUB
LET'S MAKE ENERGY... FROM GARBAGE!
WASTE? NOT!
DIRTY!
CHEAP
WE'RE THROWIN THE FUTURE AWAY!
Garbage Aficionados
LET'S TALK TRASH!
WELL... I'M ALMOST AFRAID TO SAY IT...
...IT'S CONSID-ERED KIND OF CREEPY.


them again.....?
DA N.I.T. MOTOR CLUB!
RIGHT.


WE BEEN THINKIN', MORISATO! WE OUGHTTA PUT ON A RACE T'ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS...
...BUT THEN I ASK DESE GUYS HERE, "HEY, YOU GOT ANY MONEY?" AN' THEN DEY SAY, "NO, TAMIYA! WE AIN'T GOT NO MONEY!"
TAKE TO THE STREETS! TEAR DOWN THE BILLBOARDS!
KILL ALL ADS
YAMATO HOME INC. HENRY

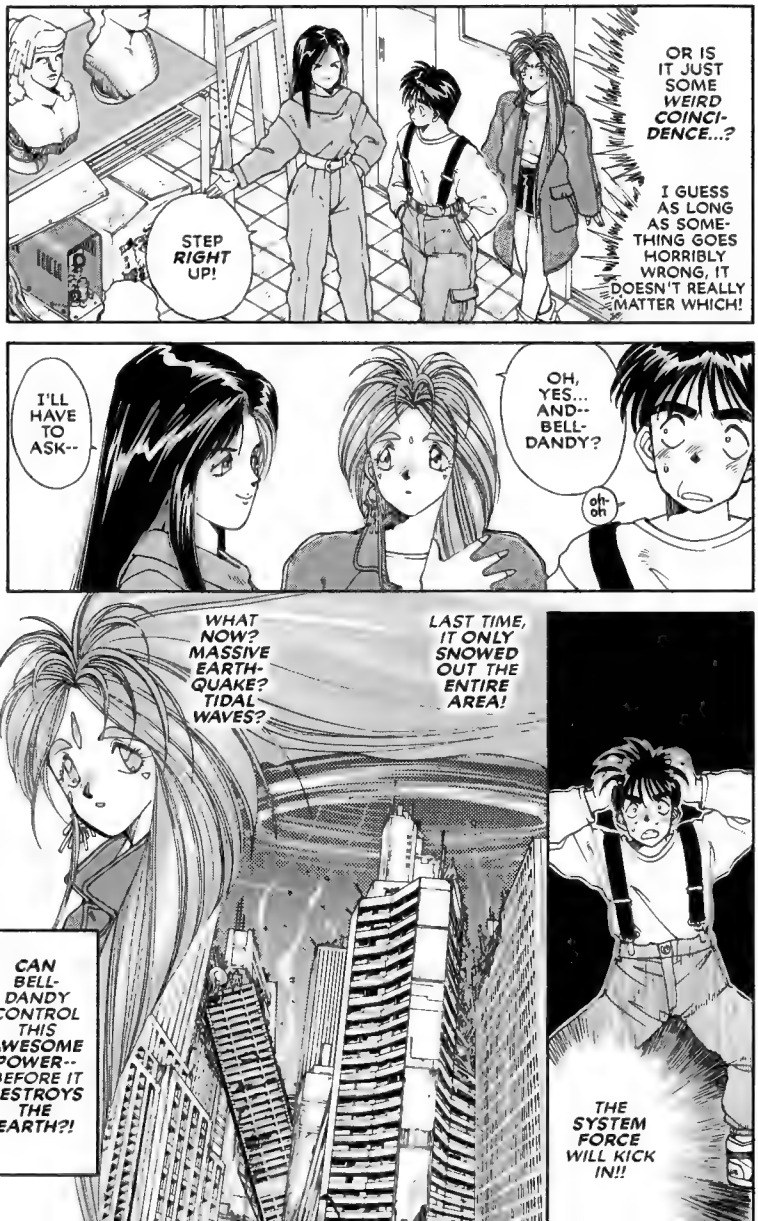

OH... REALLY...? WELL... HEY... I'VE GOT SOME... MONEY!
you do?
IF I'D KNOWN THEY WERE LIKE THIS, I WOULD NEVER HAVE JOINED.
sniff
I'LL GIVE YOU 3000 YEN.
whisk!

THAT'S MY ENTIRE MONTHLY ALLOW-ANCE!! ALL YOU'VE LEFT ME IS--
...30,278 YEN!
CORREC-TION...
....
fwap
MORISATO RULES!!
WOW! HE GAVE US 30,000 YEN!
ARRRRRGH!
THIS GUY'S LOADED!
THE CAMPUS PHILANTHRO-PIST!
OH, MAN... I HAD MY BUDGET PLANNED OUT TO THE LAST PENNY...
MONDAY: GRILLED MACKEREL AND MISO SOUP...
TUESDAY: POT STICKERS ON SALE 100 YEN A PACK.
WEDNESDAY: HAM OMELET WITH GREEN ONIONS...
GAS AND ELECTRIC BILL...
HEY! WE AIN'T JUST A BUNCH OF THUGS!

WE GOT YOUR REIMBURSEMENT ALREADY LINED UP! TEMP JOB!
30,000 YEN FOR TWO HOURS' WORK! EASY MONEY...
HUGE CANS ?
...THE 278 YEN, WE KEEP THAT. FINDER'S FEE.
THAT'S RIGHT! BELL DIDN'T SAVE ME FROM THAT MUGGING BECAUSE SHE KNEW, SOMEHOW, THAT I WAS GOING TO GET IT ALL (MOSTLY) BACK!
ACTUALLY, IT WAS BECAUSE I WAS AT A LOSS FOR WORDS...
KILN
CHA
STUDIO
HERE'S THE PLACE.
AH... EXCUSE ME? I'M SUPPOSED TO BE HERE FOR A JOB...?

...THEY LIKE ME ALREADY.
WOW...
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
HEY, OKAY-- SO WHAT AM I...

SUH-
SUH-
SUH...
HOW'S IT GOING?
♪ HE-LLO, KEIICHI! ♫ ♪
hurk ?!
...SAYOKO MISHIMA.
didn't we, like, settle this already?
MY PARENTS ARE AWAY... BUT I HOPE YOU'LL BE THERE.
I'M HAVING A LITTLE PARTY TOMORROW EVENING ?
HERE'S A MAP
I'LL TEAR HIM AWAY FROM YOU. I'LL HUMILIATE YOU. I'LL MAKE YOU LEAVE THIS CAMPUS FOREVER.
SHE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE PLOTTING SOMETHING AGAIN...?!


OR IS IT JUST SOME WEIRD COINCI-DENCE...?
I GUESS AS LONG AS SOME-THING GOES HORRIBLY WRONG, IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER WHICH!
STEP RIGHT UP!
I'LL HAVE TO ASK--
OH, YES... AND-- BELL-DANDY?
oh-oh
WHAT NOW? MASSIVE EARTH-QUAKE? TIDAL WAVES?
LAST TIME, IT ONLY SNOWED OUT THE ENTIRE AREA!
CAN BELL-DANDY CONTROL THIS AWESOME POWER-- BEFORE IT DESTROYS THE EARTH?!
THE SYSTEM FORCE WILL KICK IN!!

STRIP!
FIRST THINGS FIRST.
HA, HA... O-KAY! SO... UH... what's the job?
--THAT YOU STAY.
OH, GOOD! GOOD!
WELL I CERTAINLY DON'T MEAN FASHION MODEL.
W-WAIT A SEC... YOU DON'T MEAN... NUDE MODEL?!
YOU'RE THE MODEL FOR OUR LIFE DRAWING CLASS.
STRIP?
YOUR CLOTHES.

I HEARD YOU COULD USE THE MONEY.
WON'T YOU RECON-SIDER?
GOOD-BYE.
...BECAUSE I SET THIS ALL UP?
UM... I DUNNO...
HOW'D SHE KNOW THAT?
HUH? HEY!
I KNEW THE MOTOR CLUB WAS TRYING TO SCRAPE UP SOME MONEY... ALL IT TOOK WAS A WORD IN THE RIGHT EAR...
I KNOW JUST THE GUY FOR THE JOB!
RIGHT... NOW TO WORK.
...AND IT PAYS 30,000 YEN!
TRAPPED! LIKE A RAT!
SO WILL YOU OR WON'T YOU?

YOU JUST PROMISED YOU WOULD, REMEMBER?
DO I HAVE TO...?
....
STEP AWAY FROM THE TORSO, PLEASE.
...
AND WHEN A MAN PROMISES TO DO SOMETHING... HE DOES IT!
ALL RIGHT! I AM A MAN!
EV-ERY ONE STRIP KEI-CHAN!

KYAAAAAAAA!
WH... WHAT HAP-PENED?
...
FZZZK
WOW...
...that scream was really insincere!

SOMETIMES WHEN YOU RUB, THERE'S LIKE... STATIC ELECTRICITY.
Thanks... I think...
SORRY... BUT I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF.
fizz crackle
STORA
IN THAT CASE, I'LL JUST STEP IN HERE, AND, UH, DIVEST...
NO, NO... YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLO-GIZE.
I'M GRATE-FUL.
scuff scuff
Chik
(SIGH) I'M SORRY, KEIICHI. I GOT A LITTLE EMO-TIONAL.

...THANK YOU.
ACTUALLY, IT'S SORT OF A RELIEF WHEN YOU ACT LIKE A NORMAL GIRL.
BUT MORE TO THE POINT... NOW WHAT DO I DO?
There's another door, you know.
I GATHER YOU WISH TO DO THIS WITHOUT BEING ACTUALLY NAKED?
Well, yeah...
?
THEN WRAP YOURSELF IN THIS.

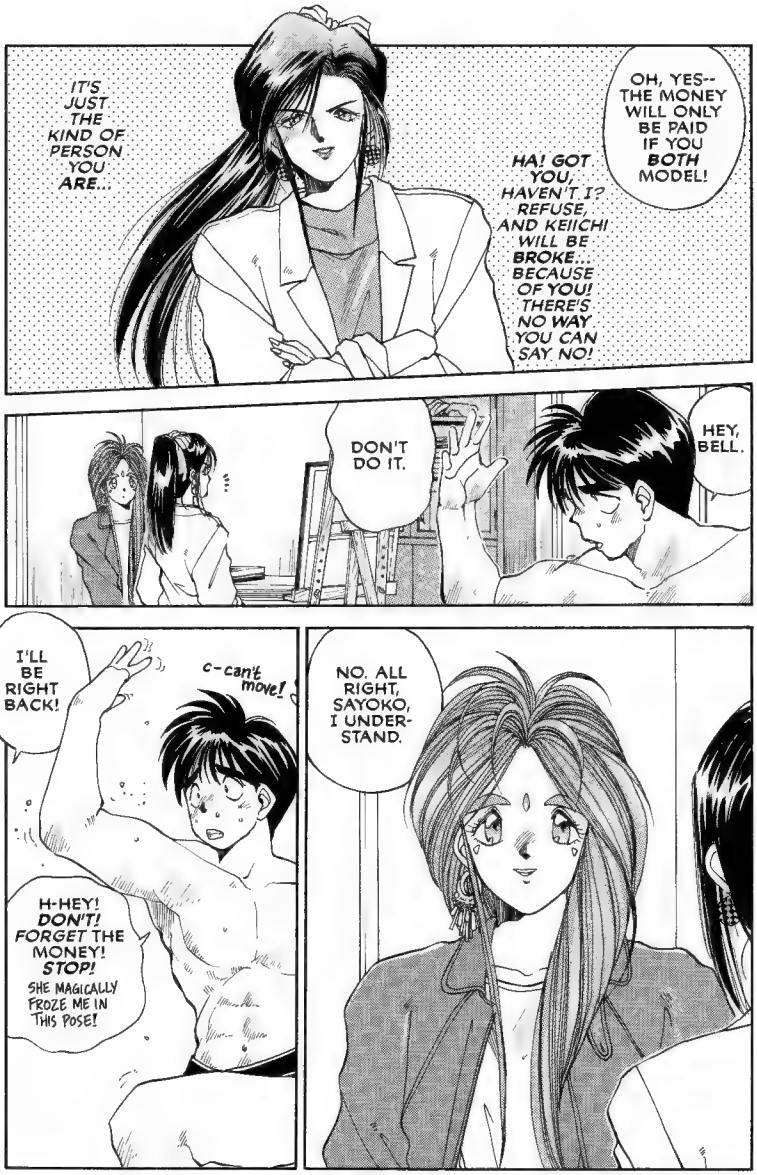
NOW...
...don't move.
YES. PERFECT.
LIKE SO...?
Gather Unto Me... Ye Spirits of the Air! Show the Form Those Present Desire!

WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THERE?
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
HOPE THIS WORKS...
?
WHAT THE ...?!
FWUMP
wow
What... what kind of monster is he...?
THERE YOU ARE!

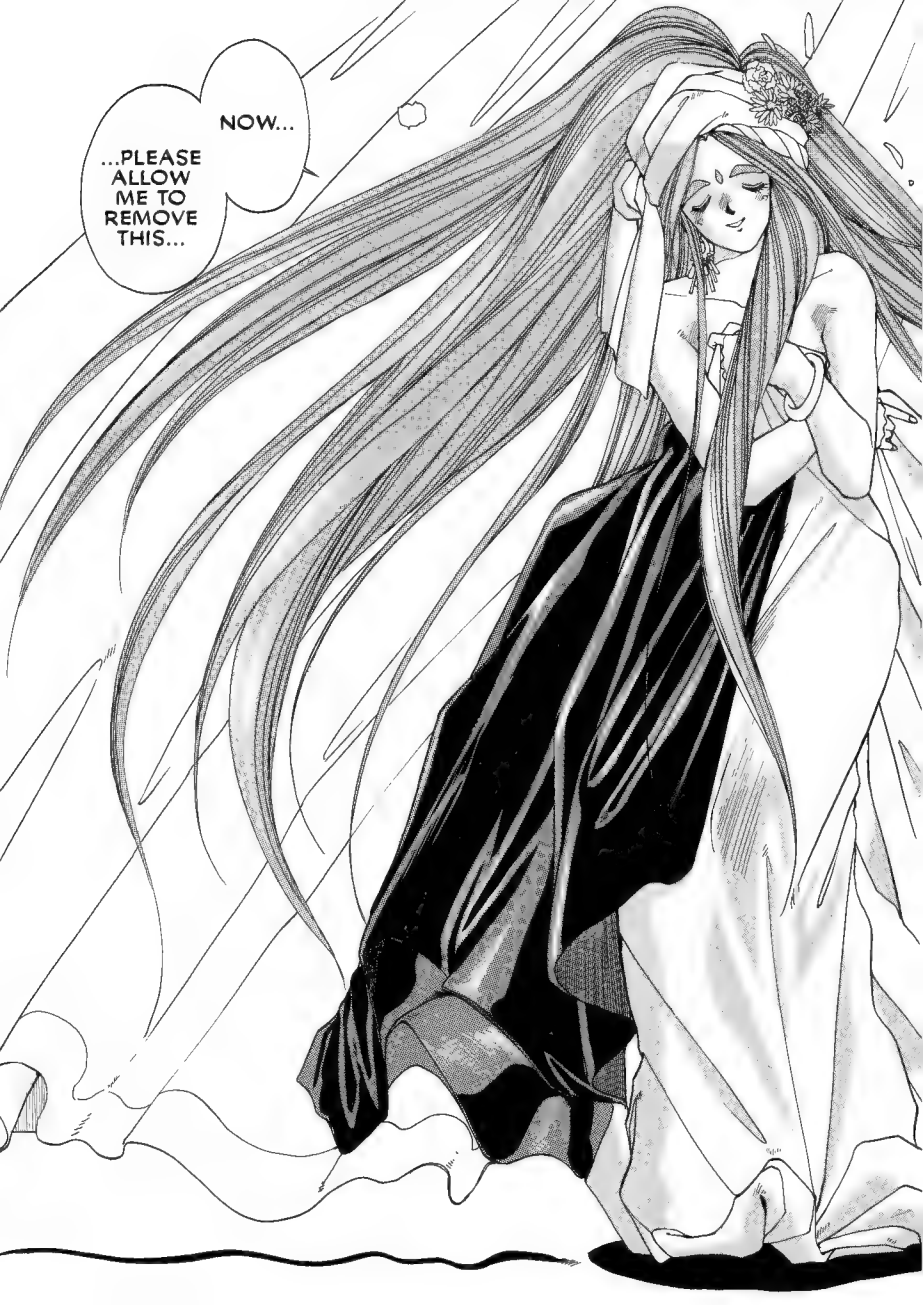
HOW'S THAT DIFFERENT FROM BEING *ACTUALLY* NUDE?
RIGHT...
INSTEAD OF YOUR *CLOTHES*, THEY'RE SEEING AN IMAGE OF YOU AS IF YOU WERE *TOTALLY* NUDE!
YOU SEE, I'M MANIPULATING THE LIGHT WAVES AS THEY REFLECT OFF YOU FROM THE NECK DOWN.
BECAUSE I'M USING THAT STATUE'S BODY FOR THE IMAGE.
↓ Keiichi examines statue closely
Sorry... no one told me anything, really...
Y-YOU'RE *SUPPOSED* TO WEAR *TRUNKS*, KEIICHI!
THERE ARE *FRESHMEN* PRESENT, YOU KNOW!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE NEVER SEEN A NAKED MAN BEFORE...
thumpa!
thum
THE RED OF ANGER? THE PINK OF AFFEC-TION?
HER AURA COLORS ARE SHIFTING SO QUICKLY I CAN'T TELL...!
AND... WOW... I NEVER KNEW SAYOKO COULD LOOK SO SERIOUS.
...I'M STILL KINDA WORRIED.
ABOUT BELL, I MEAN.
MAYBE THERE IS A LITTLE... AFFEC-TION...
I WISH I COULD SEE IF SHE ADDED ANY TRUNKS...

I FEEL LIKE I'M MISSING SOMETHING HERE...
HMM.
AH!
RIGHT.
YOU NEARLY FORGOT THE POINT OF THIS WHOLE SETUP...!
OKAY, BELL-DANDY.
WE'RE READY FOR YOU, NOW.
OR DID THEY FORGET TO MENTION THAT...?
...ME?


IT'S JUST THE KIND OF PERSON YOU ARE...
HA! GOT YOU, HAVEN'T I? REFUSE, AND KEIICHI WILL BE BROKE... BECAUSE OF YOU! THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN SAY NO!
OH, YES-- THE MONEY WILL ONLY BE PAID IF YOU BOTH MODEL!
DON'T DO IT.
HEY, BELL.
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
c-can't move!
H-HEY! DON'T! FORGET THE MONEY! STOP!
SHE MAGICALLY FROZE ME IN THIS POSE!
NO. ALL RIGHT, SAYOKO, I UNDERSTAND.

AND BELL-DANDY'S SO NAIVE, SHE MIGHT ACTUALLY COME OUT NAKED!
Maybe I shouldn't have discouraged her?
MY REIGN AS CAMPUS QUEEN SHALL BE ASSURED!
AFTER THIS HUMILI-ATION, I DOUBT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LOOK ME IN THE FACE AGAIN.
huh?
gasp!


NOW...
...PLEASE ALLOW ME TO REMOVE THIS...

LIKE A... GODDESS OF ANCIENT TIMES!
SHE... SHE'S SO PERFECT!
IT STARTED AS A TRAP... BUT NOW I HAVE FALLEN IN! YES! I MUST DRAW THIS! I MUST CAPTURE THIS BEAUTY FOR ALL ETERNITY!
I DUNNO HOW THIS IS GONNA BE RECEIVED AROUND SCHOOL...AN ENTIRE CLASS WORTH OF NUDE PICTURES OF US...
THE ABSOLUTE WORST PART IS...
...I CAN'T SEE WHAT THEY'RE SEEING.
NEXT DAY, THE SPELL HAD WORN OFF...
...
MINE'S A LITTLE PUPPY.
I DREW A TRUCK.
FRUIT? WE WEREN'T DRAWING FRUIT!
huh ...?
...AND EACH ARTIST DISCOVERED THEY HAD FAILED... TO EXPRESS THE INEXPRESSIBLE.

CHAPTER 11

This Life is Wonderful

THANKS FOR THE GRUB, GUYS!
NEKO
OH, MEGUMI... IT MAKES ME SO HAPPY FOR YOU TO SAY THAT!
I PAY MY SHARE OF THE GROCERIES, DON'T I?
Thank You, Belldandy.
AND WHO DOESN'T LOVE BELL-DANDY'S COOKING?
YOUR POINT BEING?
GEEZ... YOU'VE BEEN EATING HERE PRACTICALLY EVERY DAY!
YEAH-- "THANKS."

IF YOU KEEP HANGING AROUND HERE ALL THE TIME, I'LL *NEVER* GET ANYWHERE WITH BELLDANDY...
KEI-CHAN?
YOU GONNA EAT YOURS?

IT'S KISU FISH WITH SAUCE.
YEAH! IT'S *REALLY* GOOD!
THIS IS *NOT* GOING TO HELP.

AND THEN, WHEN I ACTUALLY *WAS* READY, SHE THOUGHT I WAS SICK...
GUESS I'LL JUST HELP MYSELF, THEN.

I'M STARTING TO WONDER IF I'LL EVER GET ANOTHER *CHANCE*...
HEY! KEI-CHAN!

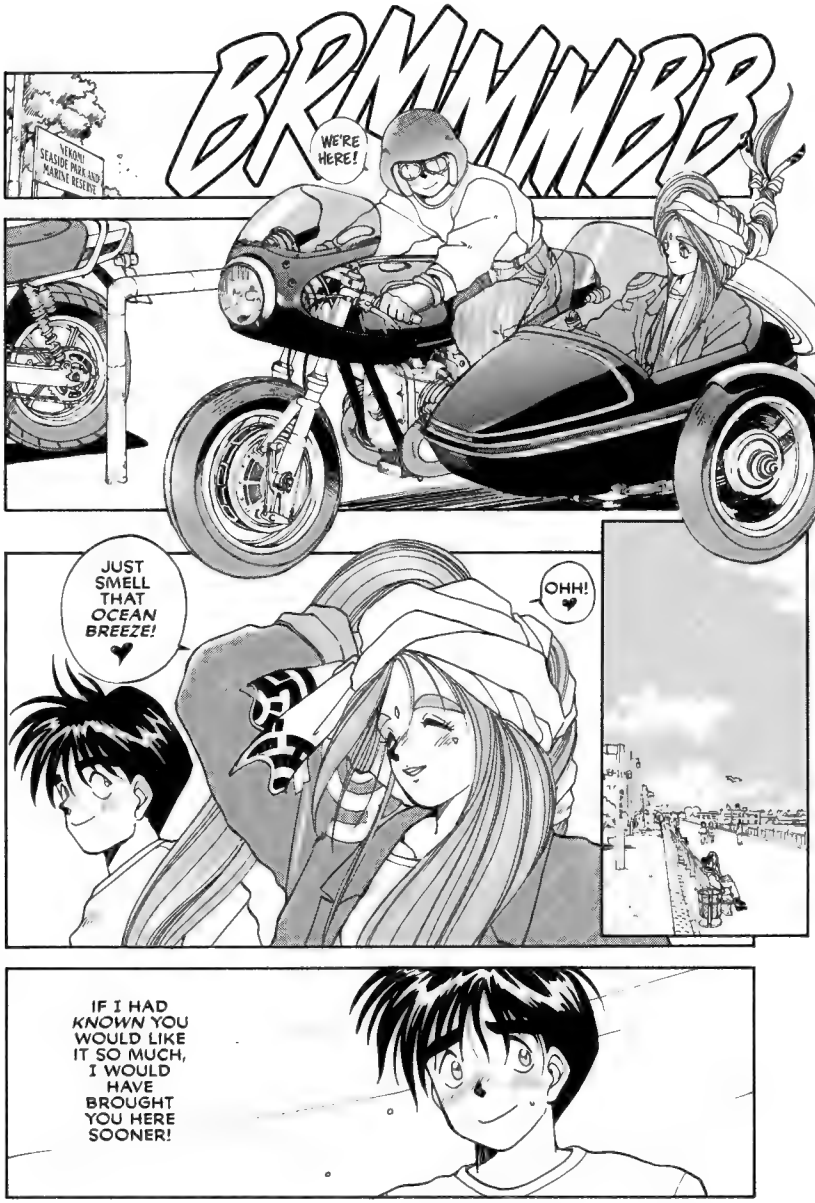
WHY CAN'T I GET JUST ONE KISS...?
IT DRIVES ME CRAZY JUST THINKING ABOUT IT!
THANKS, REI-CHAN.
hurk!
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW?
uh?
huh?
wha?
mean
I
ah
THIS KISU FISH IS REALLY...

WHY CAN'T I GET JUST ONE KISU?
GEE... I ASKED YOU, LIKE, A MILLION TIMES IF IT WAS OKAY!
THAT'S OKAY, KEIICHI. I'LL GO MAKE SOME MORE... JUST FOR YOU.
Si.ii.ii.igh
AAH, BELL
YEAH.
...HAVE YOU TWO KISSED YET?
ah

...OF COURSE, IT'S PART OF WHAT MAKES YOU SO CUTE.
KEIICHI, YOU NEVER *WERE* GOOD AT LYING...
WELL, I'M OFF. SEE YA LATER.
I SEE.
WELL... OF *COURSE,* MEGUMI!
WHEN AND WHERE DID IT OCCUR?
Huh? Details!
HO HO HO! WHO REMEMBERS THAT SORT OF THING?
OH.

NOT A BAD DAY TO HIT A SEASIDE PARK... HMM?
OH...BY THE WAY... THEY SAY IT'S GONNA BE *GORGEOUS* TOMORROW.
VAL - REVOLUT
GOOD-NESS! YOU'RE LEAVING ALREADY ...?
THANKS, BELL! THAT WAS GREAT, AS USUAL.
WAIT A SEC... A SEASIDE PARK... *HMM...*
HUH? SO?

AND SO, THAT NIGHT...
I WILL!
BETTER PACK THAT PICNIC BASKET!
HEY... I BET YOU KEI-CHAN'S GONNA SUGGEST GOING SOMEWHERE TOMORROW.
...CONSTANTLY OBSERVE HER REACTIONS...
PATIENCE ABOVE ALL...
...BOTH LAY UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS!..
Easy Reader
...THEIR MINDS, IN DIFFERENT PLACES.


BRMMMBB
WE'RE HERE!
NEKONI SEASIDE PARK AND MARINE RESERVE
JUST SMELL THAT OCEAN BREEZE!
OHH!
IF I HAD KNOWN YOU WOULD LIKE IT SO MUCH, I WOULD HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE SOONER!

Casually!
Look! Sail-boats!
...
Carefully!
Excerpt from GOING STEADY FOR DUMMIES (twenty-third edition): Enter her personal space with casual ease, starting with her hand or shoulder!
AND NOW...
...
Time it wrong, and you're dead meat!
OH, KEIICHI !!
twist!
SNATCH!

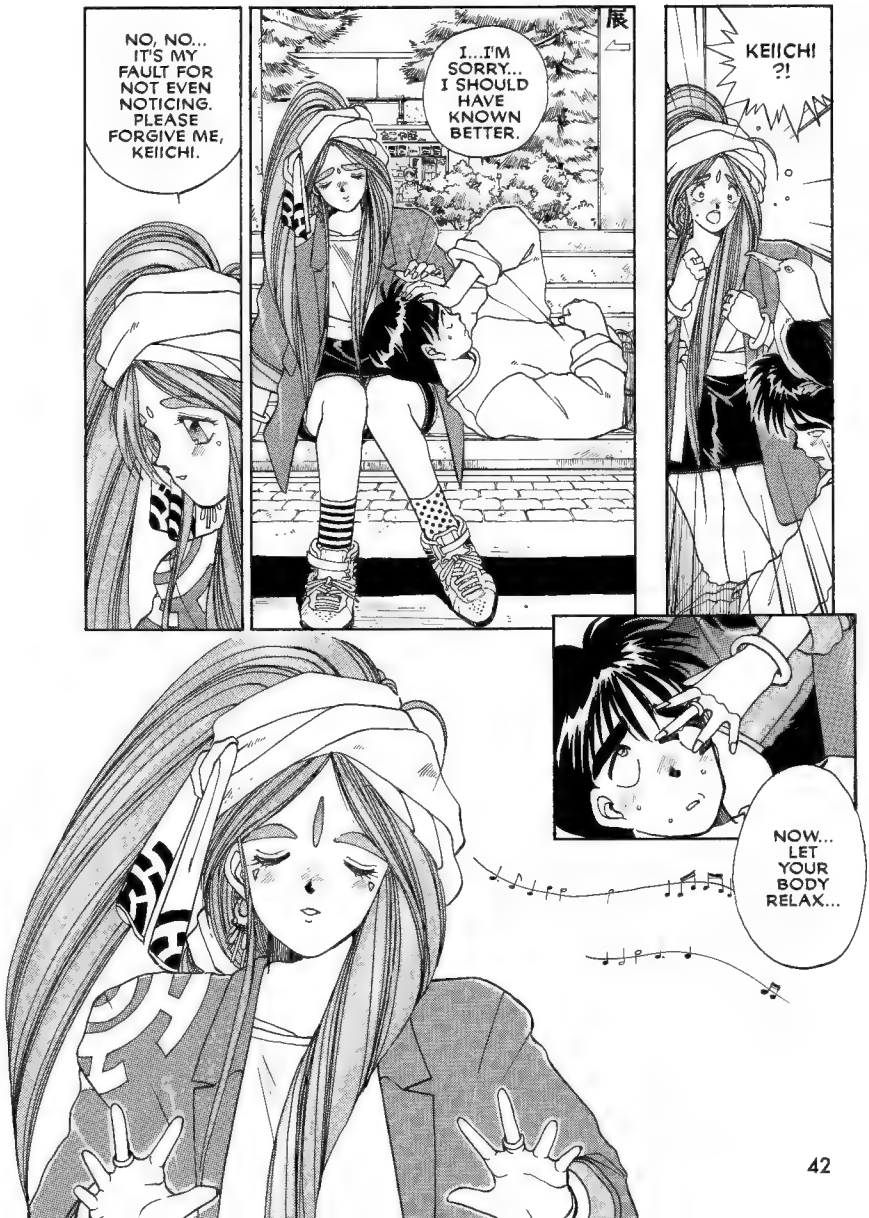
HERE YA GO.
G-G-G-GOOD IDEA!
Why'd you take your hand away, stupid?!
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME ICE CREAM?
1999s ICE CR
1999
UM...
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!
330 YEN.
?
WHEN WE WERE MODELING, THEY SEEMED SO EN-TRANCED...
WOULD YOU MIND IF I PAID...?
huh?
...THEY PAID ME A BONUS FEE!
1999

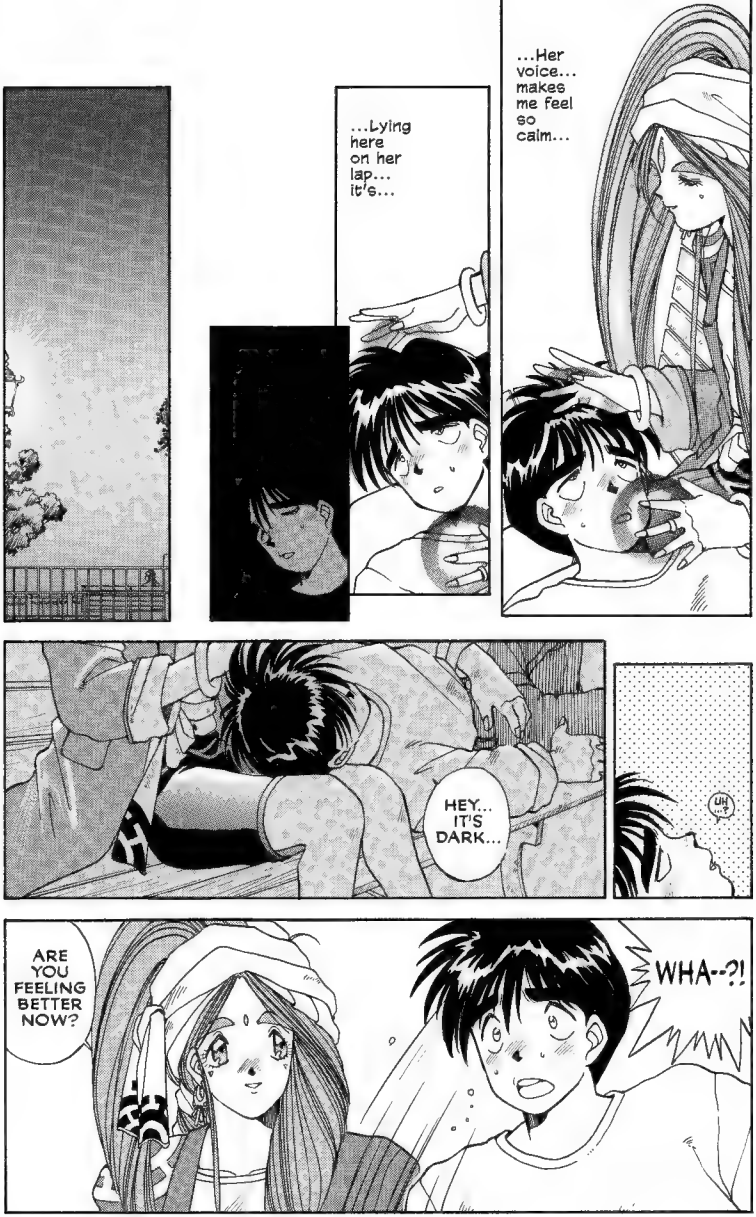
HEY... LET'S GO ROLLER SKATING!
THERE'S STILL QUITE A BIT LEFT OVER!
I WANT TO SPEND IT ON THE TWO OF US TODAY.
...
HEY, BACK OFF! THAT'S MY GIRL-FRIEND!
OH! DO BE CARE-FUL!
IF ONLY THESE WERE SKIRTS I COULD MOVE IN SKIS!
rattle rattle
AT THIS RATE...
...WE'LL BE KISSING IN NO TIME!!
screech
HEY! THAT JUST CAME OUT PRETTY NATUR-ALLY!

KEIICHI?
FOR SOME REASON, I THOUGHT ROLLER-SKATING WAS A MORE CASUAL ACTIVITY.
ha
hahh
LOOK!
SHALL WE GO...?
DRUPP DRUPP
EH?
OH... SURE!
gasp
wheeze
A SIGHT-SEEING BOAT ON A WEEKDAY MORNING... THEY'RE PRACTICALLY ALONE.

LET'S GO, MAN.
IT MAY NEVER GET BETTER THAN THIS.
THE HANDFUL OF OTHER PASSENGERS HAVE JUST HEADED FOR THE OBSERVATION DECK. NOW IT'S JUST THE TWO OF THEM.
RIGHT THIS IS AS NATURAL... AS THE BIRDS IN THE SKY.
oh
TAMP
UM... BELL ...?

fwap fwap
GRAWK!
HEY... GET OFF.
SQWAK!
FWAP
oh?
THIS... ALWAYS HAPPENS TO ME ON BOATS...
AND... YOU KNOW WHAT...?
GURK
I THINK... I'M STARTING... TO GET SEA-SICK...
KEIICHI!
LOOK! THERE'S MORE!


NO, NO... IT'S MY FAULT FOR NOT EVEN NOTICING. PLEASE FORGIVE ME, KEIICHI.
I...I'M SORRY... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER.
KEIICHI ?!
NOW... LET YOUR BODY RELAX...


...Her voice... makes me feel so calm...
...Lying here on her lap... it's...
HEY... IT'S DARK...
UH?
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER NOW?
WHA--?!

WELL... SO MUCH FOR DINNER...
ARGH... I'D MADE A RESER-VATION AT THIS PLACE FOR SEVEN...
ITALIAN
TOMATO
LOOK AT THE TIME!
YOU WERE SLEEPING SO PEACE-FULLY...
I MADE IT BEFORE WE LEFT.
HERE.
IT'S GREAT!
HOW IS IT? I WASN'T QUITE SURE WHAT TO BRING...

A PICNIC BY THE HARBOR... THE STARS, AND THE SOUND OF THE OCEAN...
rattle
rattle
PATIENCE... YEAH, THAT BOOK WAS ACTUALLY RIGHT. ISN'T THIS DAY PRETTY MUCH ALL YOU COULD ASK FOR...?
uhhg
STUCK IN MY THROAT.
KEIICHI ?!
THMP THMP
URG!
OH, NO.
KTANK

STOP
!!
ドンドド

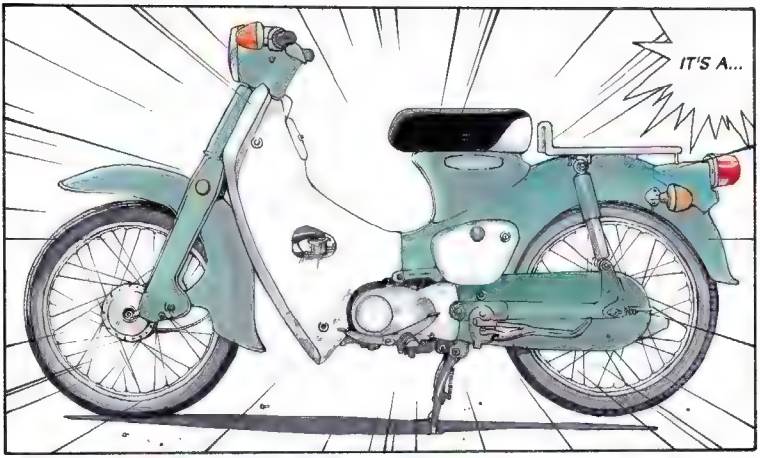
SORRY...
ARE... YOU ALL RIGHT?

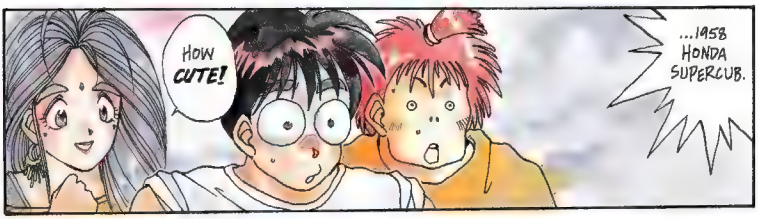
z
WHEN SHE'S AWAKE... I'LL ASK HER WHERE ALL THE FLOWERS CAME FROM.

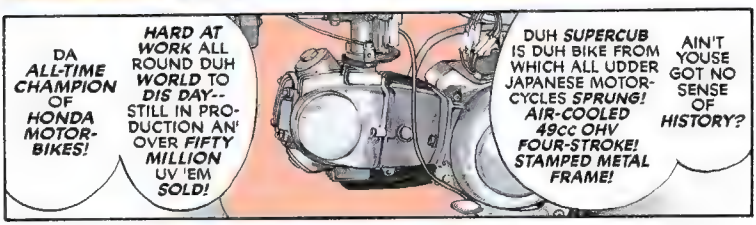
CHAPTER 12

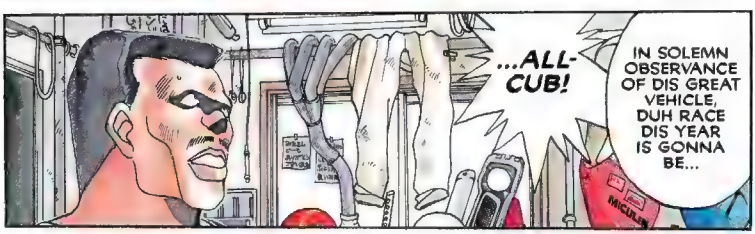
Love is the Prize

WE GOT US A *RACE*, KIDS--A RACE WIT' *THE USHIKUBO UNIVERSITY MOTORCYCLE CLUB!*
I FEEL THE NEED... THE NEED FOR SPEED...
YOUSE GUYS BEEN *WAITIN'* FOR THIS--AN' WE'S *FINALLY* READY T' WELCOME YA TO THE CLUB *RIGHT!!*
NEW RECRUITS-- *LISSEN UP!*
AND DUH *MACHINE* WHAT YOU GUYS IS GONNA *RACE* IS--
--DAT !!


IT'S A...

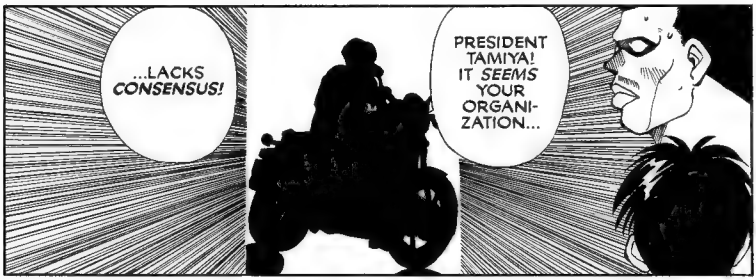

HOW CUTE!
...1958 HONDA SUPERCUB.

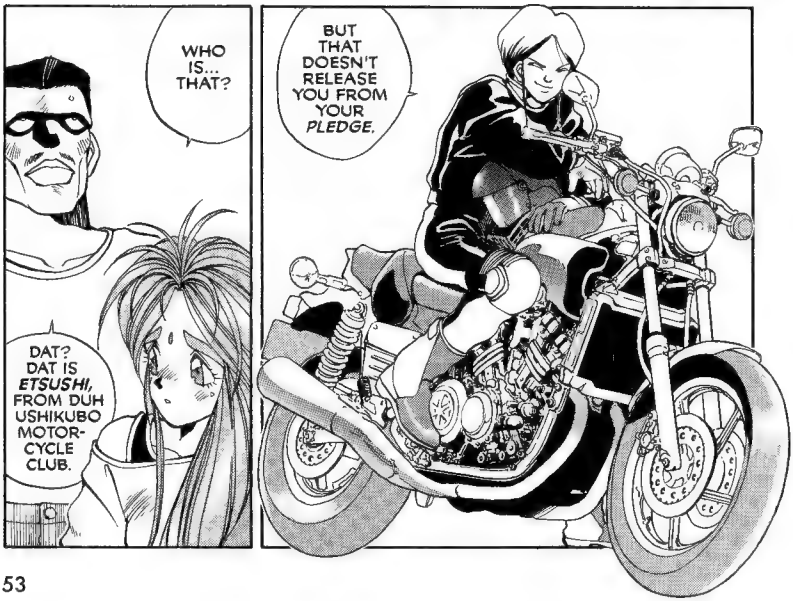

DA ALL-TIME CHAMPION OF HONDA MOTOR-BIKES!
HARD AT WORK ALL ROUND DUH WORLD TO DIS DAY-- STILL IN PRO-DUCTION AN' OVER FIFTY MILLION UV 'EM SOLD!
DUH SUPERCUB IS DUH BIKE FROM WHICH ALL UDDER JAPANESE MOTOR-CYCLES SPRUNG! AIR-COOLED 49cc OHV FOUR-STROKE! STAMPED METAL FRAME!
AIN'T YOUSE GOT NO SENSE OF HISTORY?


...ALL-CUB!
IN SOLEMN OBSERVANCE OF DIS GREAT VEHICLE, DUH RACE DIS YEAR IS GONNA BE...

BUT DAT AIN'T PAYIN' IT PROPER HONOR! NO! DERE'S ONLY ONE WAY WE CAN EXPRESS HOW WE FEEL...
...BELL-DANDY MUST BE OUR RACE QUEEN!
NEKOMI
WH... WHAAAT ?!
IS THAT ANYTHING LIKE "CAMPUS QUEEN"?

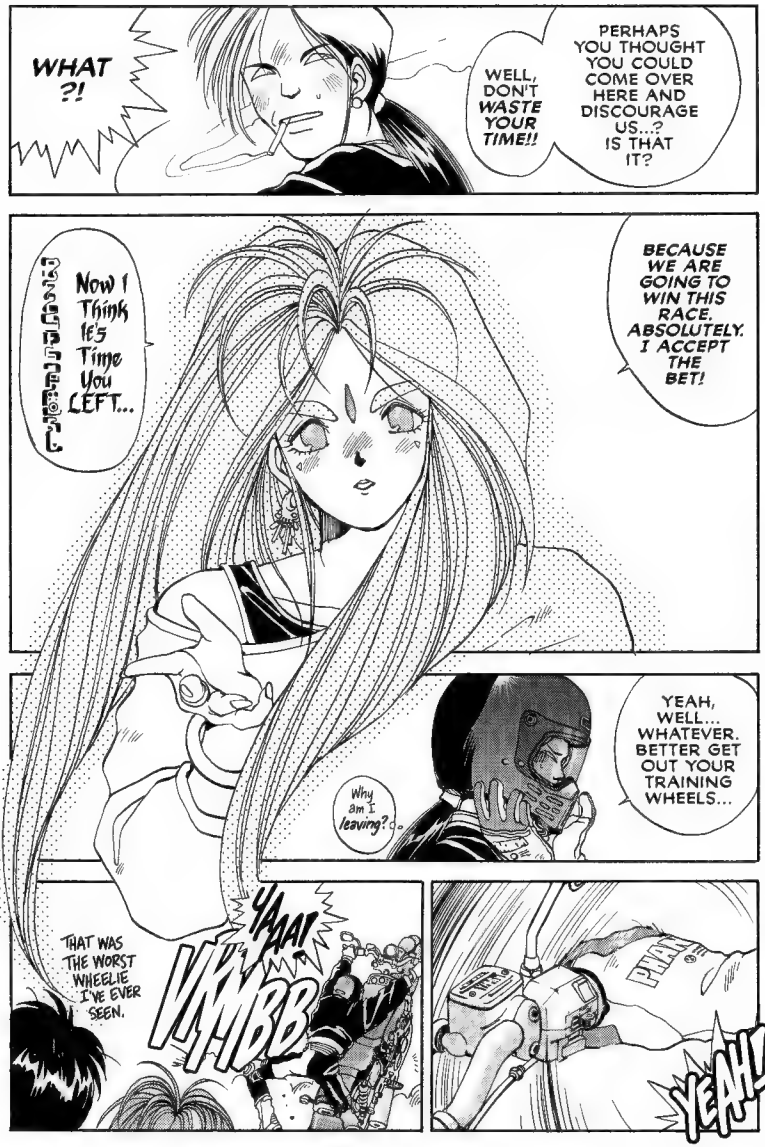
LEMME EXPLAIN...
SO!
JUST WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO--

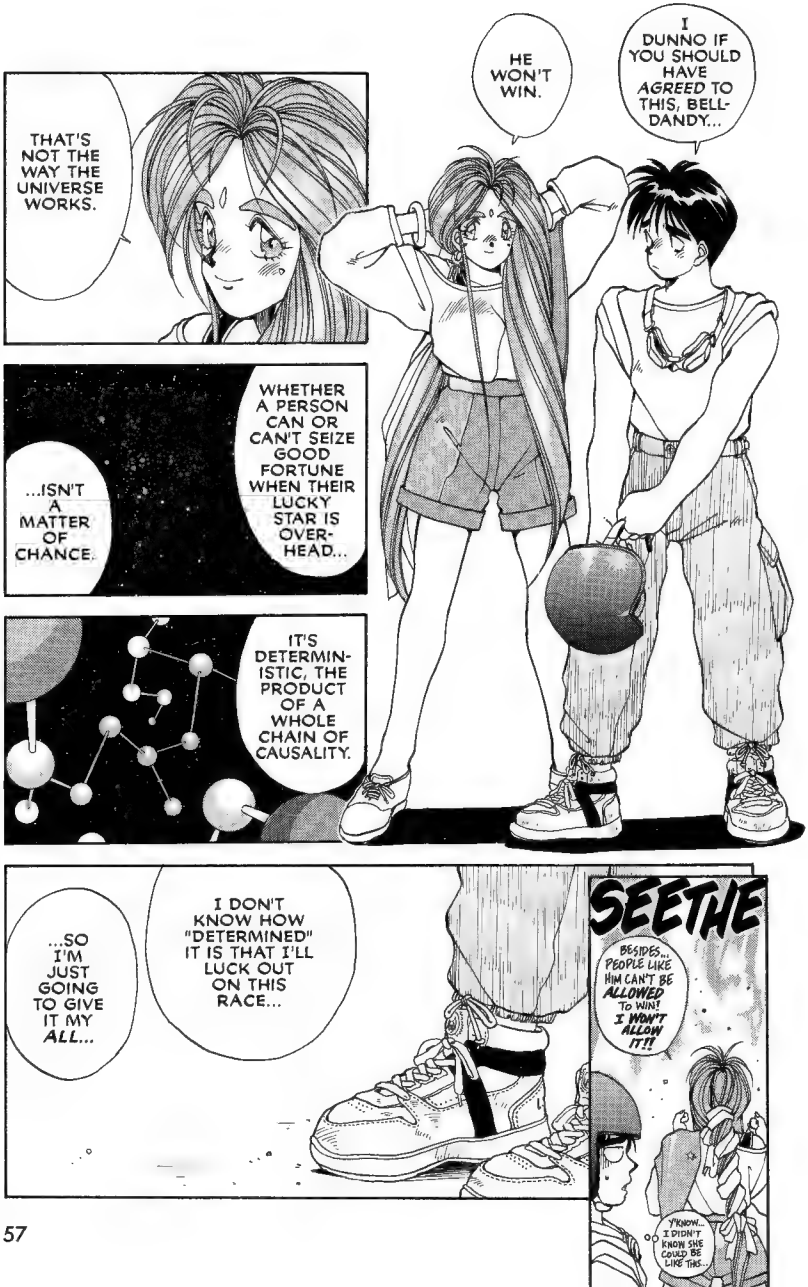

...LACKS CONSENSUS!
PRESIDENT TAMIYA! IT SEEMS YOUR ORGANI-ZATION...


WHO IS... THAT?
DAT? DAT IS ETSUSHI, FROM DUH USHIKUBO MOTOR-CYCLE CLUB.
BUT THAT DOESN'T RELEASE YOU FROM YOUR PLEDGE.

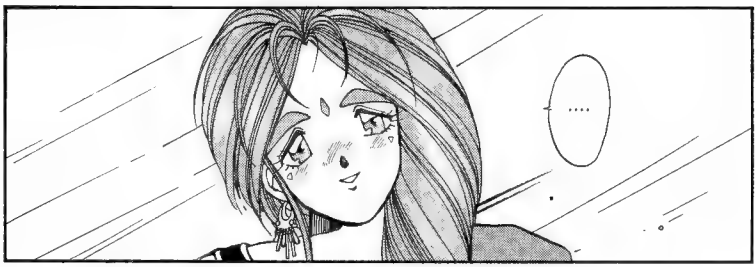
AND THIS MUST BE THE PRIZE.
'CAUSE LIKE, IF DAT DUDE GETS HIS BEAK INTA SUMPIN'...
ETSUSHI OHTAKI-- BUT DEY CALL HIM SNAPPING TURTLE ETSUSHI--
...HE DON'T NEVER LET GO.
'CAUSE LIKE, SNAPPIN' TURTLES, IF DEY GET DER BEAK INTA YA, SEE, THEY DON'T NEVER LET GO.
...YOU'LL MAKE AN EXCELLENT USHIKUBO RACE QUEEN.
YES... WHEN WE WIN THIS LITTLE CONTEST...
WHAT ?!
UNFORTUNATELY, I CANNOT CONTRADICT DA DUDE. ALLOW ME TA COMPLETE MUH STORY...
JAMAAA!!
HE'S ROOFLESS! DAT'S HOW HE GOT T' BE DA DICTATOR OF HIS OUTFIT!

WHAT A JOKE! AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS ALREADY?
huh?
TAMIYAA!!
HE TOTALLY SET YOU UP!
YOU'RE A BLITHERING IDIOT!
I AIN'T DENYIN' IT.
WE'VE GOT OUR ANNUAL RACE COMING UP--SHALL WE LAY A LITTLE BET ON IT?!
A WAGER ...?
YEAH, WE'D HAD A FEW.. AN' DEN DA CONVER-SATION TURNS TO ENGINES...
DUH IN-LINE FOUR IS A THING A' BEAUTY, JOIK!
FOOL! THE V-4 IS EVOLUTIONARY PERFEC-TION.
...THIS TEAM'S A RECIPE FOR DEFEAT.
MAY AS WELL DROP THE FLAG RIGHT NOW...
"Flake"?!
...AND A CHUNK OF PORK FOR THE STEW.
WHY, WE'VE GOT FISHBONE HERE...
...SOME SHRIMP FLAKE...


WHAT ?!
WELL, DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME!!
PERHAPS YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD COME OVER HERE AND DISCOURAGE US...? IS THAT IT?
BECAUSE WE ARE GOING TO WIN THIS RACE. ABSOLUTELY. I ACCEPT THE BET!
Now I Think It's Time You LEFT...
YEAH, WELL... WHATEVER. BETTER GET OUT YOUR TRAINING WHEELS...
Why am I leaving?
THAT WAS THE WORST WHEELIE I'VE EVER SEEN.
YAAAI
VRRRBB
PHAN
YEAH!


I DUNNO IF YOU SHOULD HAVE AGREED TO THIS, BELL-DANDY...
HE WON'T WIN.
THAT'S NOT THE WAY THE UNIVERSE WORKS.
WHETHER A PERSON CAN OR CAN'T SEIZE GOOD FORTUNE WHEN THEIR LUCKY STAR IS OVER-HEAD...
...ISN'T A MATTER OF CHANCE.
IT'S DETERMIN-ISTIC, THE PRODUCT OF A WHOLE CHAIN OF CAUSALITY.
I DON'T KNOW HOW "DETERMINED" IT IS THAT I'LL LUCK OUT ON THIS RACE...
...SO I'M JUST GOING TO GIVE IT MY ALL...
SEETHE
BESIDES... PEOPLE LIKE HIM CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO WIN! I WON'T ALLOW IT!!
Y'KNOW... I DIDN'T KNOW SHE COULD BE LIKE THIS...

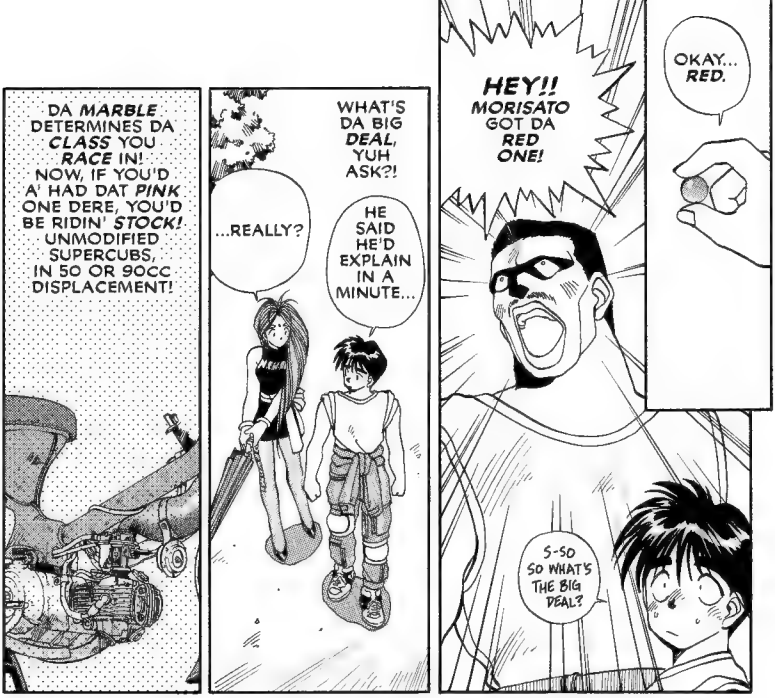
...BECAUSE I'D RATHER SMEAR MYSELF ALL OVER THE TRACK THAN LET THAT ARROGANT CREEP ANYWHERE NEAR YOU!

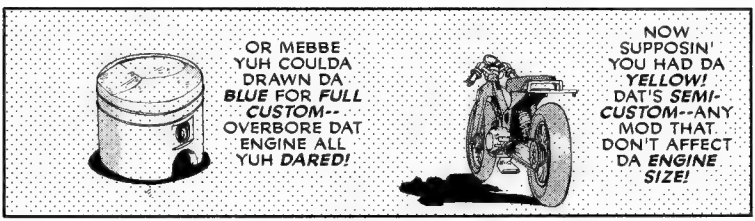

....

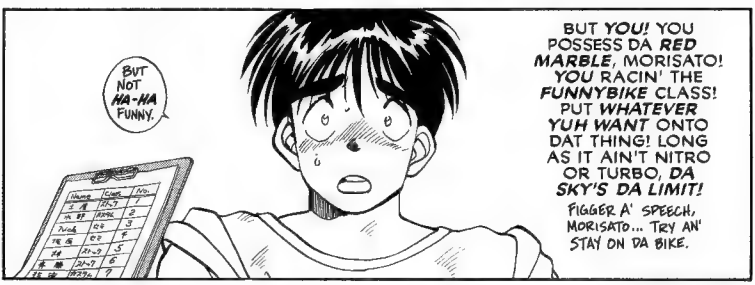
...Bell?
SHE USED UP TOO MUCH OF HER POWER AGAIN.
Z
UH... BELL... I...

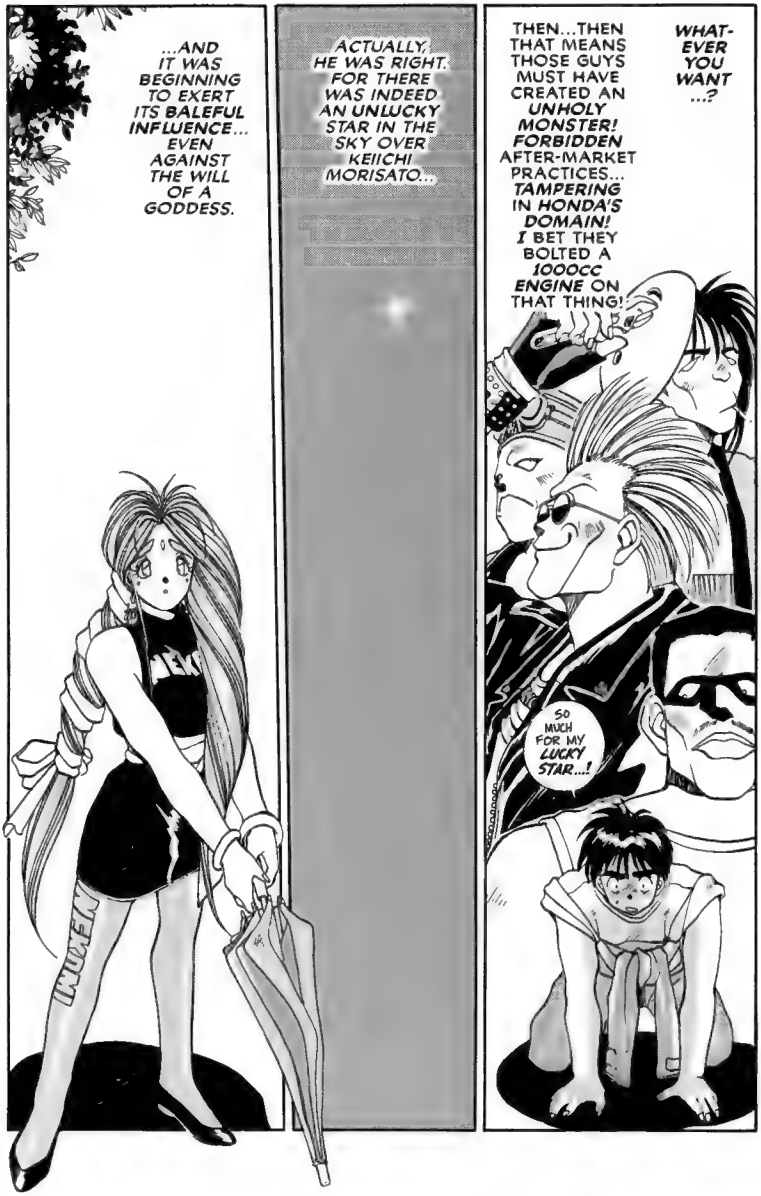
oof
THANK YOU, KEIICHI!

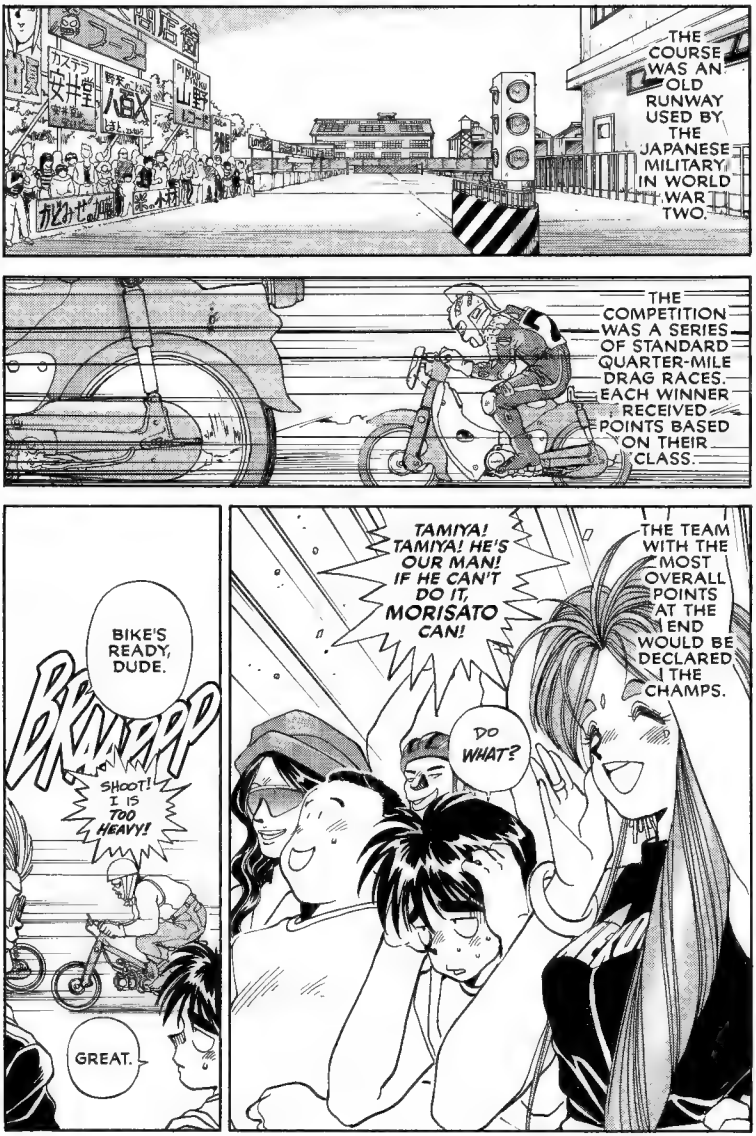
RACE DAY
HEY, NOW!
WHOA!
hmph!
DIS IS HOW IT WORKS...
YA PULL OUT A COLORED MARBLE...
...AND DEN YA GOES TO DUH REGISTRATION DESK OF DA SAME COLOR.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS?
WHY LEAVE IT TO CHANCE?
SHUDDUP AN' GRAB ONE!
HUH... PINK.


DA MARBLE DETERMINES DA CLASS YOU RACE IN! NOW, IF YOU'D A' HAD DAT PINK ONE DERE, YOU'D BE RIDIN' STOCK! UNMODIFIED SUPERCUBS, IN 50 OR 90CC DISPLACEMENT!
WHAT'S DA BIG DEAL, YUH ASK?!
...REALLY?
HE SAID HE'D EXPLAIN IN A MINUTE...
HEY!! MORISATO GOT DA RED ONE!
OKAY... RED.
S-SO SO WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?


OR MEBBE YUH COULDA DRAWN DA BLUE FOR FULL CUSTOM-- OVERBORE DAT ENGINE ALL YUH DARED!
NOW SUPPOSIN' YOU HAD DA YELLOW! DAT'S SEMI-CUSTOM--ANY MOD THAT DON'T AFFECT DA ENGINE SIZE!


BUT NOT HA-HA FUNNY.
BUT YOU! YOU POSSESS DA RED MARBLE, MORISATO! YOU RACIN' THE FUNNYBIKE CLASS! PUT WHATEVER YUH WANT ONTO DAT THING! LONG AS IT AIN'T NITRO OR TURBO, DA SKY'S DA LIMIT!
FIGGER A' SPEECH, MORISATO... TRY AN' STAY ON DA BIKE.


...AND IT WAS BEGINNING TO EXERT ITS BALEFUL INFLUENCE... EVEN AGAINST THE WILL OF A GODDESS.
ACTUALLY, HE WAS RIGHT. FOR THERE WAS INDEED AN UNLUCKY STAR IN THE SKY OVER KEIICHI MORISATO...
THEN...THEN THAT MEANS THOSE GUYS MUST HAVE CREATED AN UNHOLY MONSTER! FORBIDDEN AFTER-MARKET PRACTICES... TAMPERING IN HONDA'S DOMAIN! I BET THEY BOLTED A 1000cc ENGINE ON THAT THING!
WHAT-EVER YOU WANT ...?
SO MUCH FOR MY LUCKY STAR...!

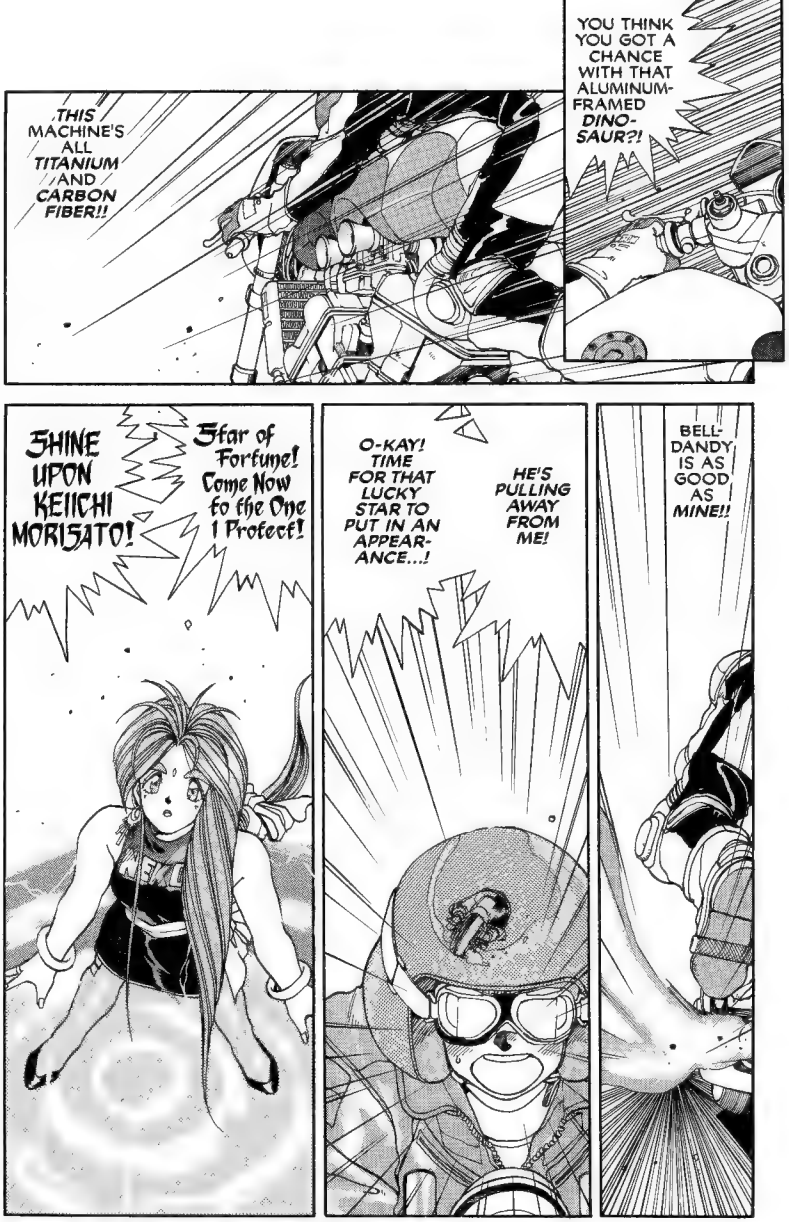

THE COURSE WAS AN OLD RUNWAY USED BY THE JAPANESE MILITARY IN WORLD WAR TWO.
THE COMPETITION WAS A SERIES OF STANDARD QUARTER-MILE DRAG RACES. EACH WINNER RECEIVED POINTS BASED ON THEIR CLASS.
BIKE'S READY, DUDE.
BRAAPP
SHOOT! I IS TOO HEAVY!
GREAT.
TAMIYA! TAMIYA! HE'S OUR MAN! IF HE CAN'T DO IT, MORISATO CAN!
DO WHAT?
THE TEAM WITH THE MOST OVERALL POINTS AT THE END WOULD BE DECLARED THE CHAMPS.

BUT...
...I THOUGHT I WAS RACING A SUPER-CUB...?
NEKOMI
IT'S 1300ccs!
BUT THE FRAME COULDN'T HOLD THE ENGINE.
OH, YEAH. LOOK CLOSELY. WE KEPT THE FRONT RIM AND THE BRAKE.
MADE OUT OF TOILET PAPER PROBABLY...
FEAR NOT, LIL' BUDDY-- CHECK THIS OUT... IT'S GOT A DRAG CHUTE!!
BELIEVE ME--I'M THINKING ABOUT IT!
IT STILL QUALIFIES. BRAKES ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PART, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT.
DON'T WORRY.

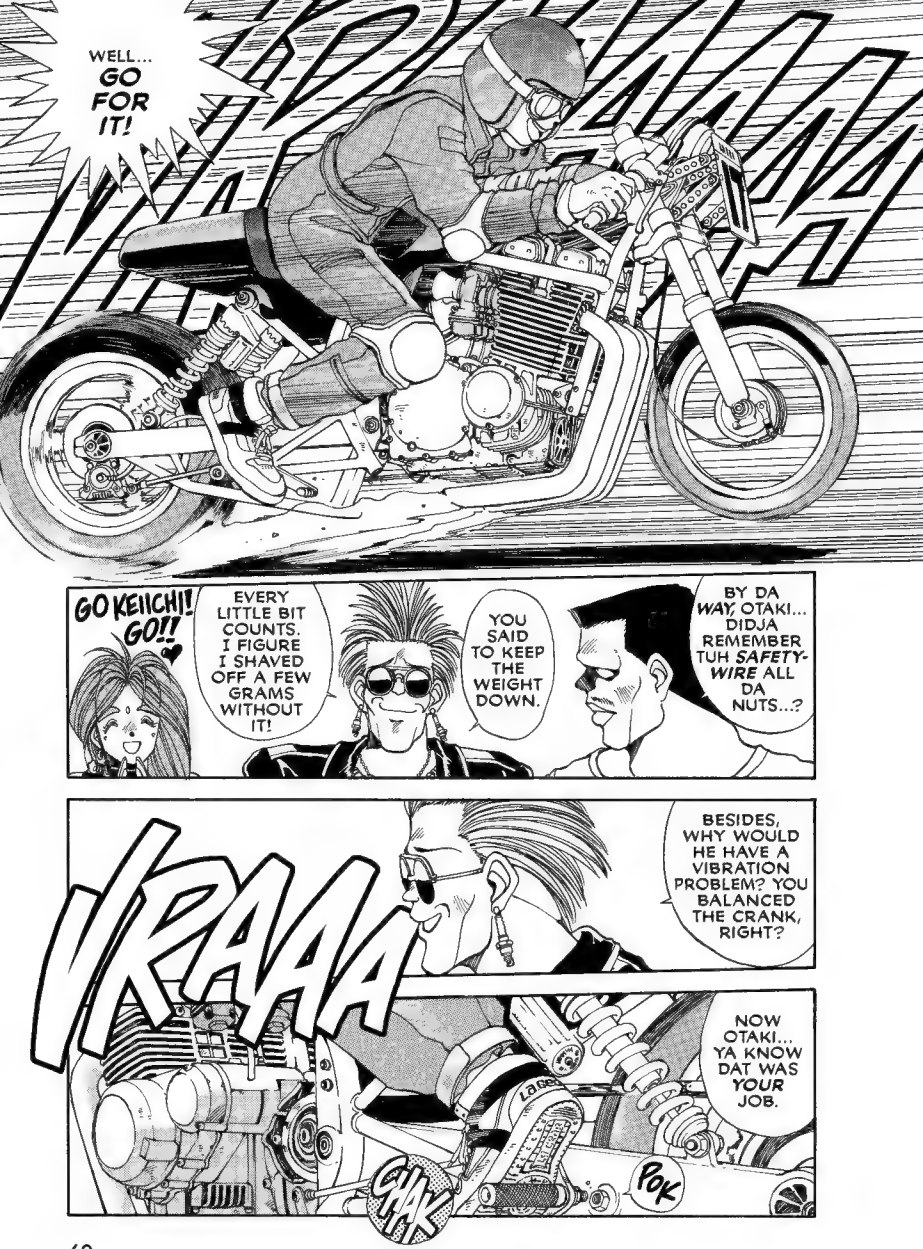
I'VE GOT A VFR, THE HOTTEST NEW ENGINE AROUND-- PORTED, POLISHED, AND BLUE-PRINTED!
HEH....A GSX1300R, EH? CUTE LITTLE ANTIQUE.
PRESENT SCORE: USHIKUBO, 24-- NEKOMI, 21.
BUT THE FUNNYBIKE RACE WAS GOOD FOR FIVE POINTS-- VICTORY HUNG IN THE BALANCE!
THERE'S NO WAY YOUR PATHETIC IN-LINE FOUR CAN DEFEAT MY V-4 BEAUTY.
GOOD LUCK!
READY!!!

GO!!
OH ...?!
VRAAAAAAAAH
...NO! NOT NOW-- IT'S KEIICHI'S UNLUCKY STAR!
NEKO

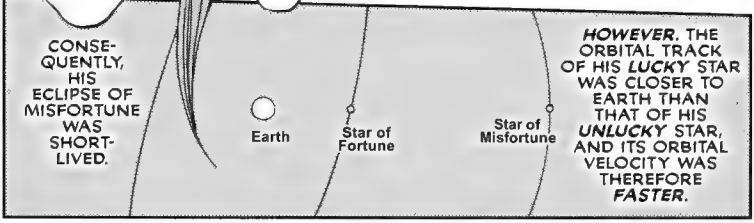
VRAAAAA
HAH! HE'S BEHIND ALREADY!!
GIVE IT UP, SHRIMP!
DAMN!! MY CLUTCH SLIPPED!!
IF I CAN NAIL THE REST OF MY SHIFTS PERFECTLY...
VRAAAAA
HE'S ONLY A HAIR AHEAD!!


THIS MACHINE'S ALL TITANIUM AND CARBON FIBER!!
YOU THINK YOU GOT A CHANCE WITH THAT ALUMINUM-FRAMED DINO-SAUR?!
BELL-DANDY IS AS GOOD AS MINE!!
HE'S PULLING AWAY FROM ME!
O-KAY! TIME FOR THAT LUCKY STAR TO PUT IN AN APPEAR-ANCE...!
Star of Fortune! Come Now to the One I Protect!
SHINE UPON KEIICHI MORISATO!

Star of Fortune! Grant Him Power... Grant Him Opportunity! Grant Him... LUCK!
AT THAT VERY MOMENT, ONE OF KEIICHI'S DISTANT LUCKY STARS WAS JUST PASSING OVERHEAD.
Star of Misfortune
Star of Fortune
AND AIDED BY BELLDANDY'S PRAYER... THE VIBRATIONS OF THE BIKE CHANCED TO ACHIEVE...A PERFECT BALANCE.
WHOA! WHAT HAP-PENED ?!
IT SUDDENLY CAME ON THE PIPE AGAIN!!


WELL... GO FOR IT!
VRAAAA
GO KEIICHI! GO!!
EVERY LITTLE BIT COUNTS. I FIGURE I SHAVED OFF A FEW GRAMS WITHOUT IT!
YOU SAID TO KEEP THE WEIGHT DOWN.
BY DA WAY, OTAKI... DIDJA REMEMBER TUH SAFETY-WIRE ALL DA NUTS...?
VRAAA
BESIDES, WHY WOULD HE HAVE A VIBRATION PROBLEM? YOU BALANCED THE CRANK, RIGHT?
NOW OTAKI... YA KNOW DAT WAS YOUR JOB.
CHAK
POK

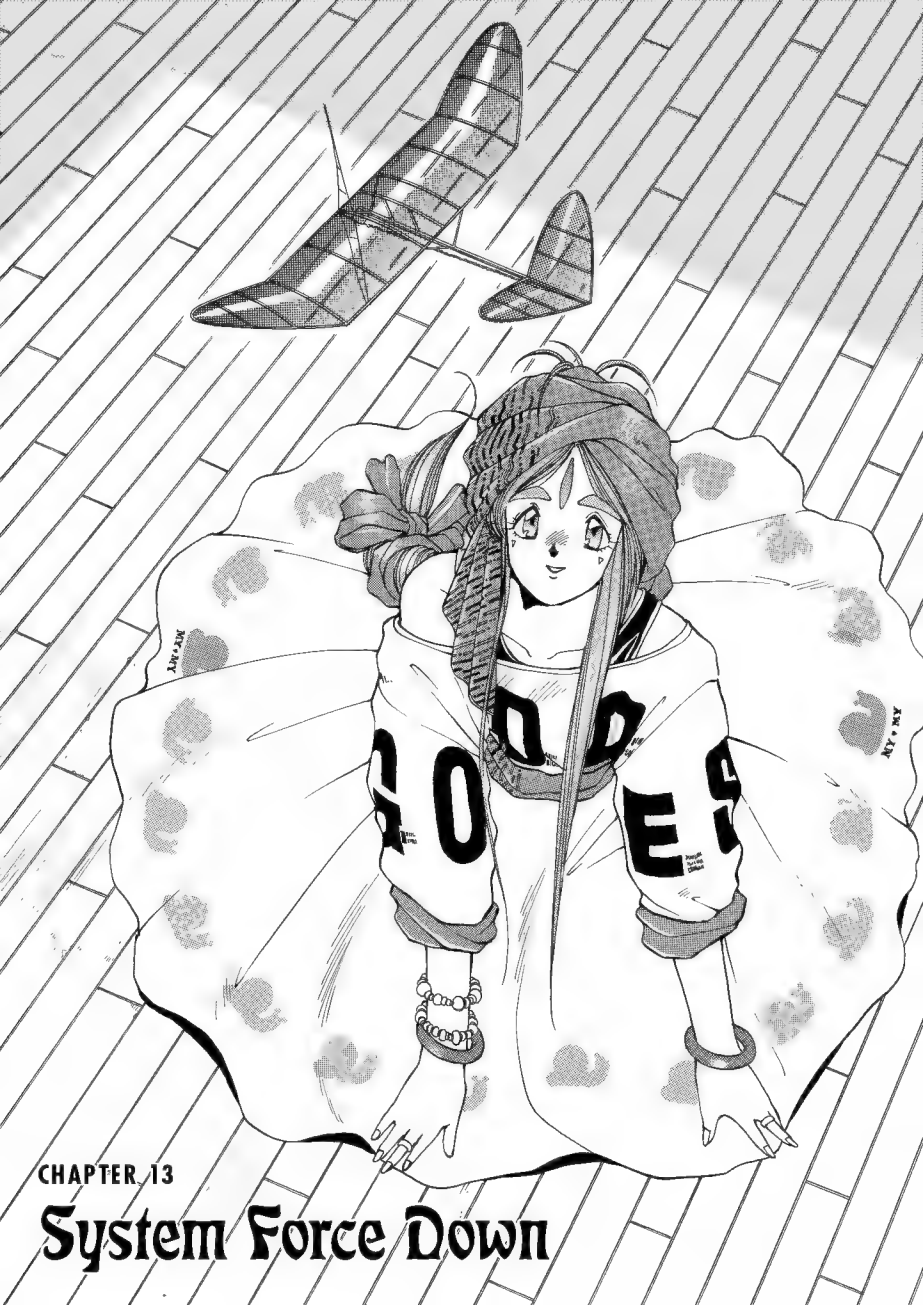
YES!!
WHAT TH-?!
17
18


CONSE-QUENTLY, HIS ECLIPSE OF MISFORTUNE WAS SHORT-LIVED.
Earth
Star of Fortune
Star of Misfortune
HOWEVER, THE ORBITAL TRACK OF HIS *LUCKY* STAR WAS CLOSER TO EARTH THAN THAT OF HIS *UNLUCKY* STAR, AND ITS ORBITAL VELOCITY WAS THEREFORE *FASTER*.

ELEMENTARY PHYSICS.
POINGG
SNAP
POP

WAIT! DON'T PANIC... STAY CALM... REMEMBER, YOU'VE GOT A DRAG CHUTE!
AIEE! THE BRAKE CABLE BROKE!!
SPARK
DRAG CHUTE DANGER
BOMF
BKAM
FWOP FWOP
...RIGHT.
THE SHIFT LEVER!
THE TRIPLE CLAMP!
THE REAR DISC CALI-PERS!
THE OIL PAN!
WAGH!
HAW HAW! WHATTA DRAG!
IS GOOD. IS FUNNY.
eh?

THE FINISH LINE!
HEH. HEH-HEH. I WON! AND I'M ALIVE!
MY STAR IS FAR, FAR AWAY...
MEKU
BUT MY GODDESS IS VERY NEAR

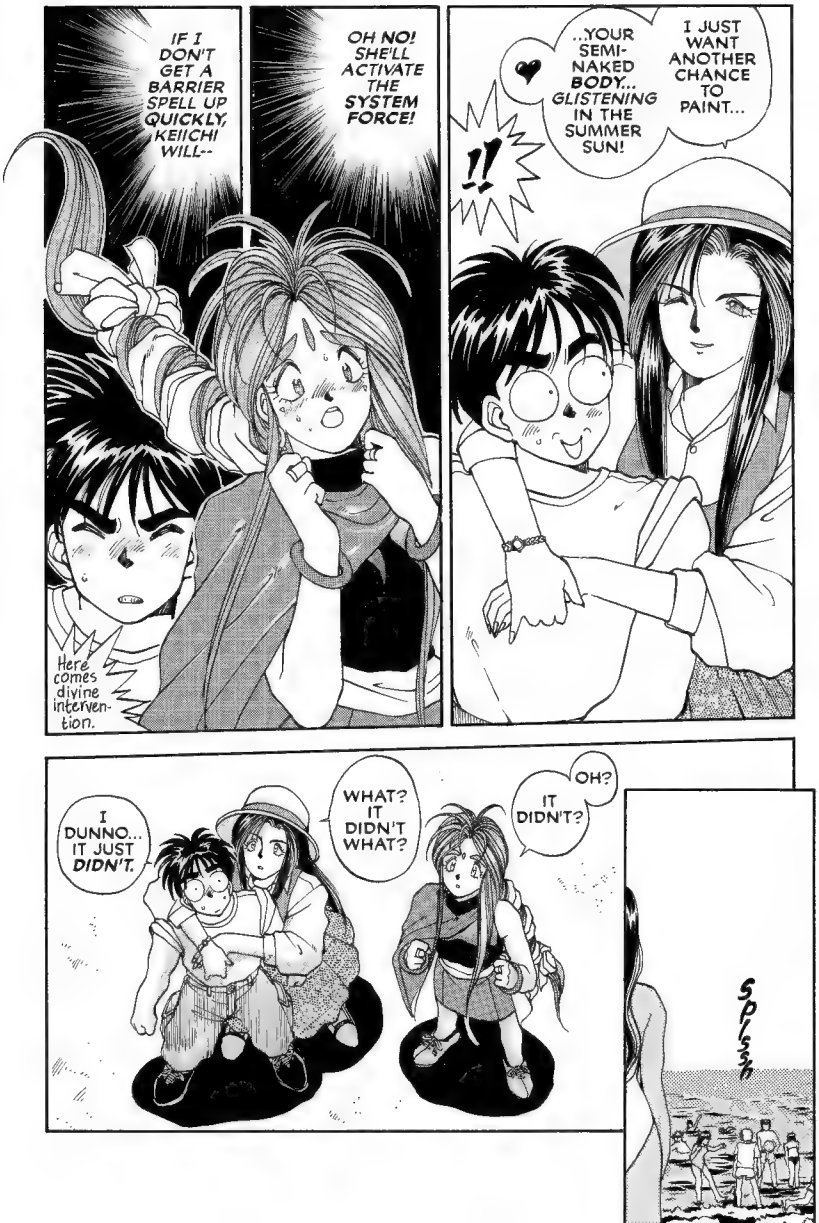


CHAPTER 13

System Force Down

KATAGAI BEACH.
THE NEKOMI TECH MOTOR CLUB IS HOLDING ITS ANNUAL FOUR-DAY RETREAT.
HERE IN THE SUMMER...
hot.
I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS SO CLOSE!
...ANYTHING AT ALL CAN HAPPEN BETWEEN A YOUNG WOMAN AND A YOUNG MAN.

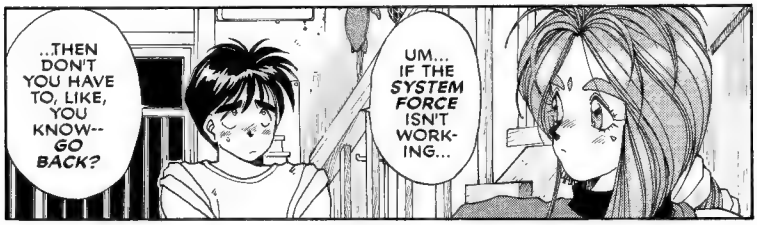
...HEY!
LET'S NOT WASTE THESE FOUR DAYS!
YOO-HOO!! MORI-SATO-kun!
WAIT... DON'T TELL ME.
?!
HOW YOU THINK WE QUALIFIED FOR DAT GROUP RATE? SOMEBODY'S GOT TA TAKE CARE A' DA FINANCES! AN' DA GENDER BALANCE...
YEAH.
DID YOU BOOK US WITH THE ART CLUB?!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TREAT ME LIKE SOME GRIT YOU FOUND IN YOUR SWIM TRUNKS.
skff

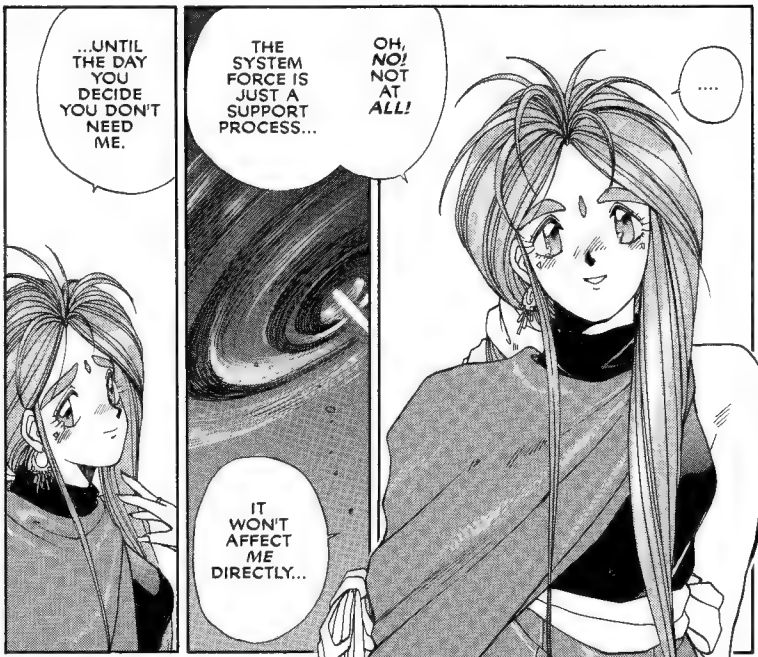

IF I DON'T GET A BARRIER SPELL UP QUICKLY, KEIICHI WILL--
OH NO! SHE'LL ACTIVATE THE SYSTEM FORCE!
Here comes divine intervention.
I JUST WANT ANOTHER CHANCE TO PAINT...
..YOUR SEMI-NAKED BODY.. GLISTENING IN THE SUMMER SUN!
!!
I DUNNO... IT JUST DIDN'T.
WHAT? IT DIDN'T WHAT?
OH? IT DIDN'T?
SPLASH

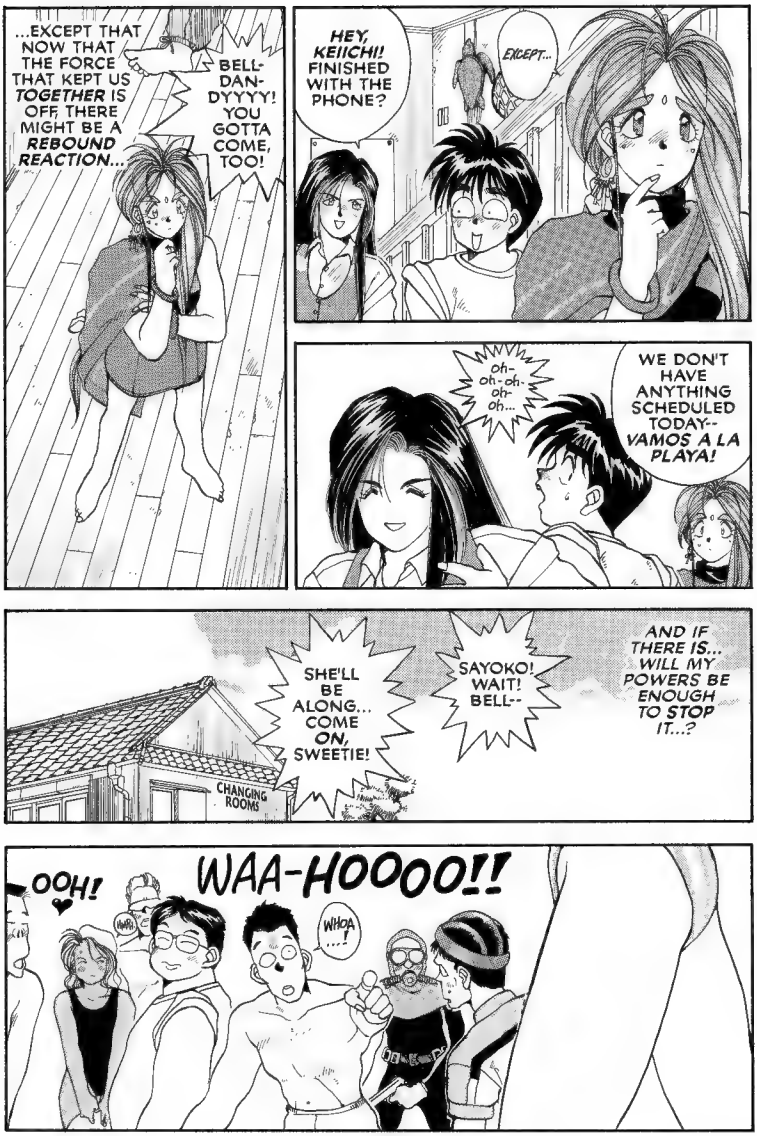
C'MON... LET'S CHECK OUT THE HOTEL.
WH... WHAT HAP-PENED TO THE SYSTEM FORCE?!
THIS IS TAMIYA MAKING YOUR RESERVA-TIONS.
WHAT IS THIS DUMP?
DON'T TELL ME... IT'S DOWN?
HERE WE IS!
EXCUSE ME, BUT... I HAVE TO MAKE A PHONE CALL.
REALLY? ME, TOO!

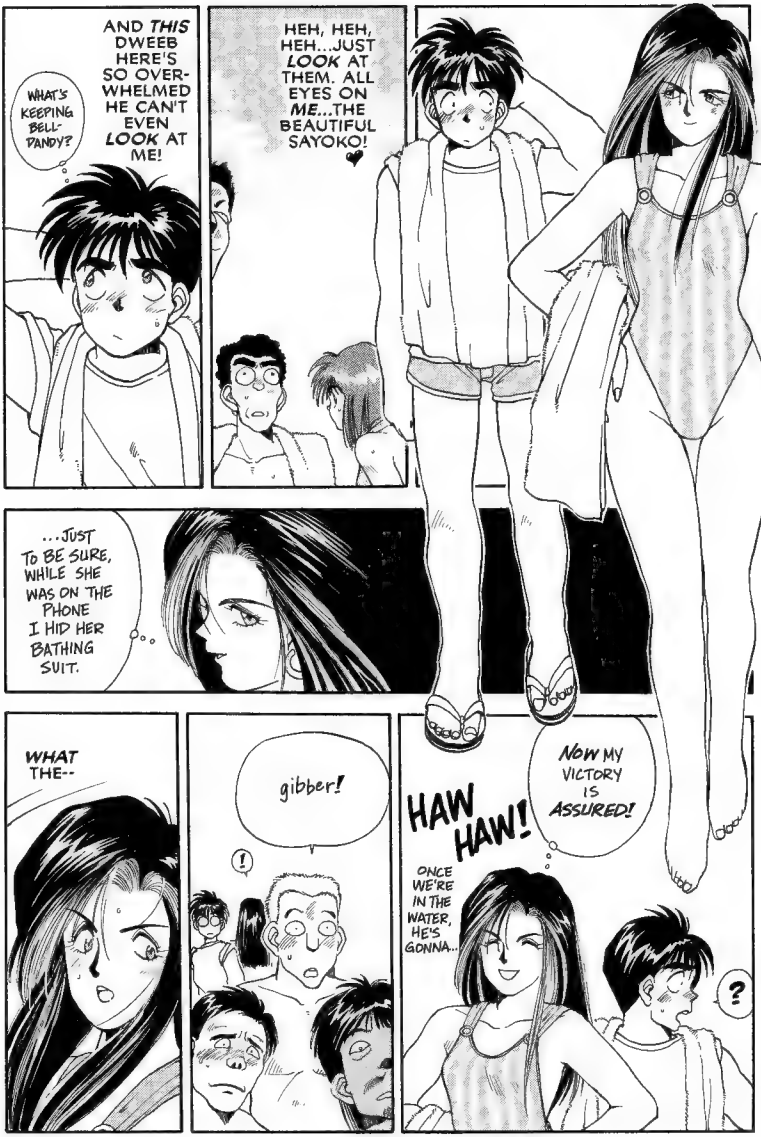
HOW DOES SHE DIAL HEAVEN FROM A PAY PHONE?
HELLO...? SISTER...?
KCHAK
SHHHING
SHH-CHK-CHK-CHK
WHY, IF IT ISN'T MY LITTLE SISTER, BELL-DANDY!
WHAT'S THAT...? THE SYSTEM FORCE IS DOWN?
YES... WELL... SHE'S CHASING DOWN A BUG IN THE SYSTEM.
UH-HUH. SORRY... RIGHT NOW I DON'T HAVE A CLUE WHEN IT'LL BE FIXED.
IT'S JUST A SUB-SYSTEM, ANYWAY... YOU SHOULD BE FINE!
I...I GUESS SO.
WELL... 'BYE.
KRCHK

HEH, HEH, HEH! ❤
ahah

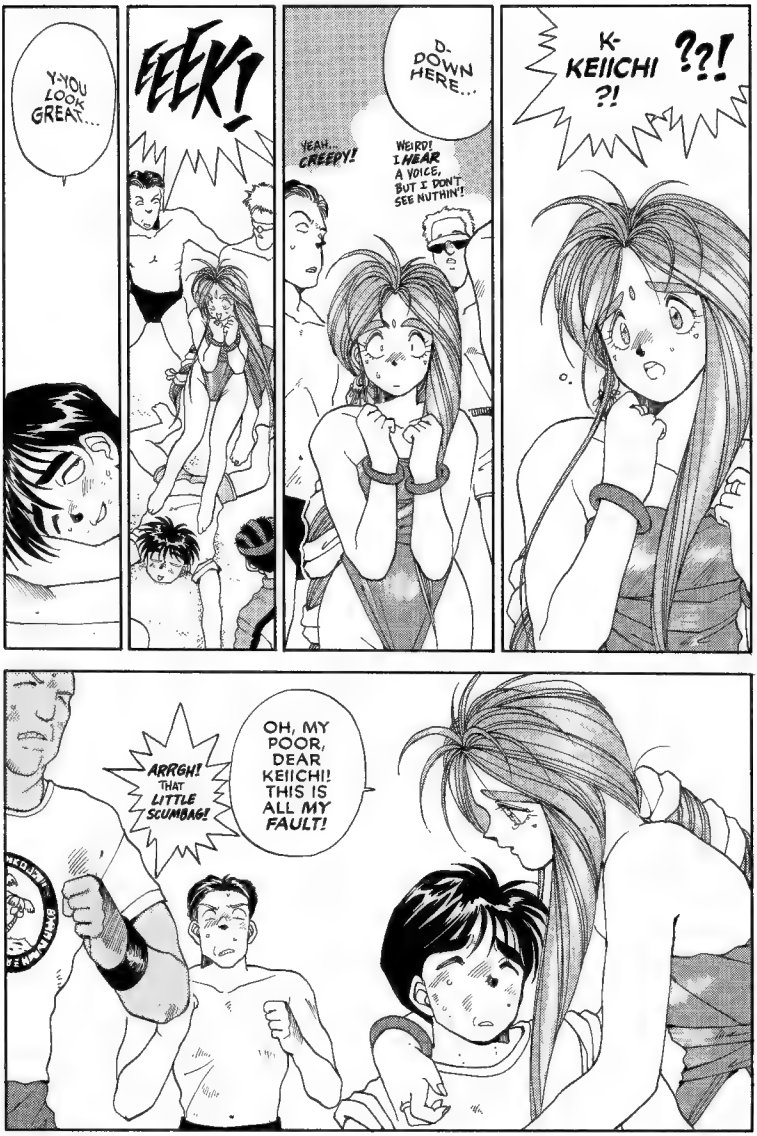

..THEN DON'T YOU HAVE TO, LIKE, YOU KNOW-- GO BACK?
UM... IF THE SYSTEM FORCE ISN'T WORK-ING...

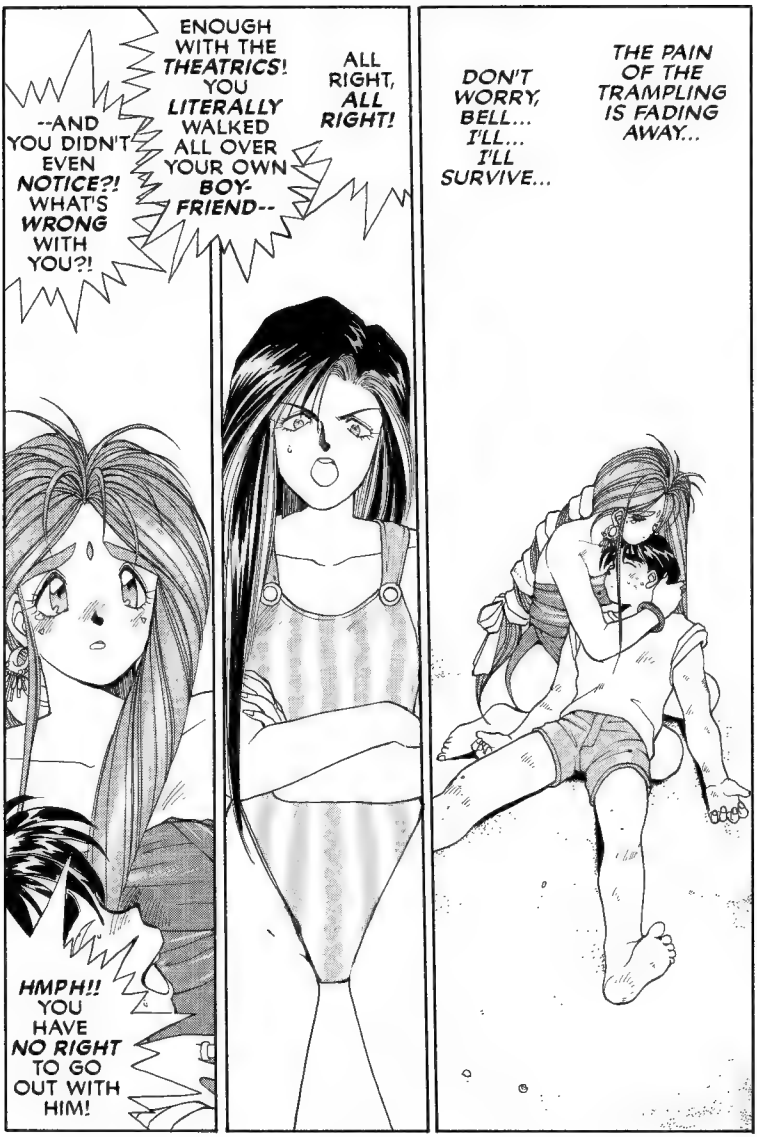

...UNTIL THE DAY YOU DECIDE YOU DON'T NEED ME.
THE SYSTEM FORCE IS JUST A SUPPORT PROCESS...
OH, NO! NOT AT ALL!
....
IT WON'T AFFECT ME DIRECTLY...

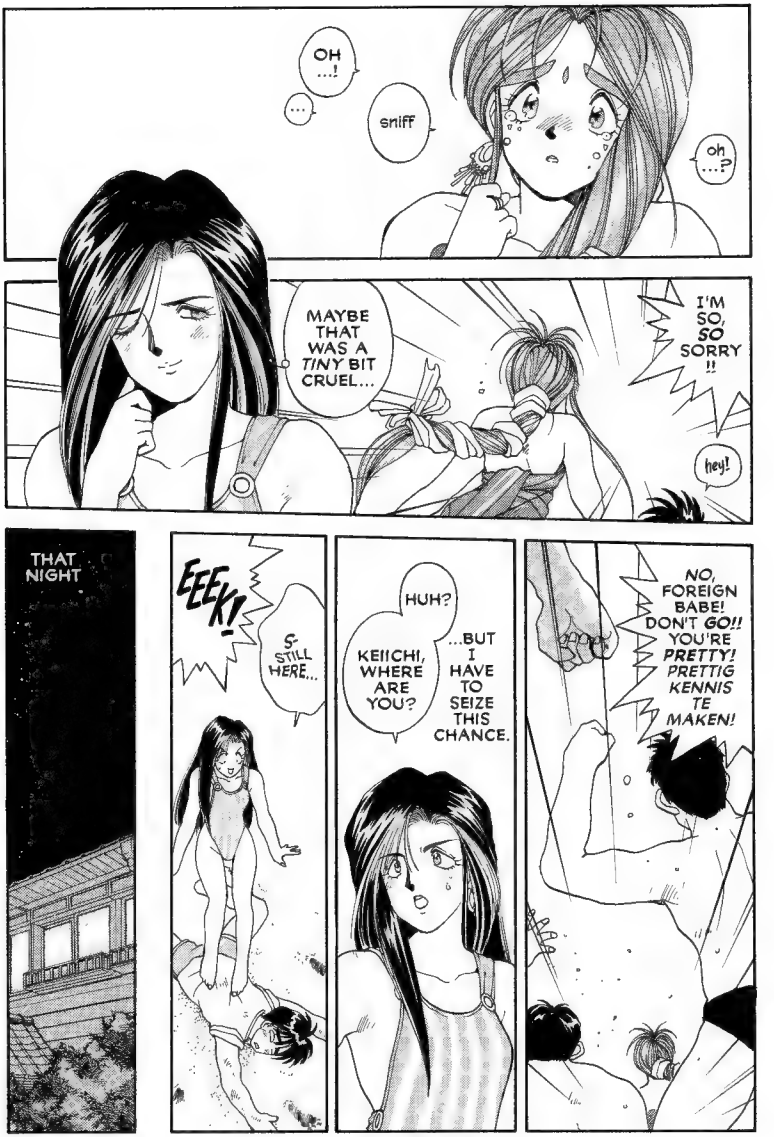

...EXCEPT THAT NOW THAT THE FORCE THAT KEPT US TOGETHER IS OFF, THERE MIGHT BE A REBOUND REACTION...
BELL-DAN-DYYYY! YOU GOTTA COME, TOO!
HEY, KEIICHI! FINISHED WITH THE PHONE?
EXCEPT...
oh-oh-oh-oh-oh...
WE DON'T HAVE ANYTHING SCHEDULED TODAY-- VAMOS A LA PLAYA!
SHE'LL BE ALONG... COME ON, SWEETIE!
CHANGING ROOMS
SAYOKO! WAIT! BELL--
AND IF THERE IS... WILL MY POWERS BE ENOUGH TO STOP IT...?
OOH!
WAA-HOOOO!!
WHOA!...


WHAT'S KEEPING BELL-DANDY?
AND THIS DWEEB HERE'S SO OVER-WHELMED HE CAN'T EVEN LOOK AT ME!
HEH, HEH, HEH...JUST LOOK AT THEM. ALL EYES ON ME...THE BEAUTIFUL SAYOKO!
...JUST TO BE SURE, WHILE SHE WAS ON THE PHONE I HID HER BATHING SUIT.
WHAT THE--
gibber!
!
HAW HAW!
NOW MY VICTORY IS ASSURED!
ONCE WE'RE IN THE WATER, HE'S GONNA..
?

KEIICHI!
WHA... WHAT IS SHE WEARING? JUST A STRIP OF CLOTH?! BUT WHERE... HOW?!
NO WAY!
NOW THAT'S A WRAP!!
OOH!
HEY! ANYBODY KNOW WHERE THIS CHICK'S FROM?!
Bonjour!
um
um
Beli-issima!
So cute!


Y-YOU LOOK GREAT...
EEEK!
D-DOWN HERE...
YEAH... CREEPY!
WEIRD! I HEAR A VOICE, BUT I DON'T SEE NUTHIN'!
K-KEIICHI ?!
?!
ARRGH! THAT LITTLE SCUMBAG!
OH, MY POOR, DEAR KEIICHI! THIS IS ALL MY FAULT!


THE PAIN OF THE TRAMPLING IS FADING AWAY...
DON'T WORRY, BELL... I'LL... I'LL SURVIVE...
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!
ENOUGH WITH THE THEATRICS! YOU LITERALLY WALKED ALL OVER YOUR OWN BOY-FRIEND--
--AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE?! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?!
HMPH!! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO GO OUT WITH HIM!


OH ...!
...
sniff
oh ...?
MAYBE THAT WAS A TINY BIT CRUEL...
I'M SO, SO SORRY !!
hey!
THAT NIGHT
EEEK!
S-STILL HERE...
HUH?
KEIICHI, WHERE ARE YOU?
...BUT I HAVE TO SEIZE THIS CHANCE.
NO, FOREIGN BABE! DON'T GO!! YOU'RE PRETTY! PRETTIG KENNIS TE MAKEN!

HEY, MORISATO... WHERE ARE YOU GOIN'...?
I'VE GOT TO CLEAR THINGS UP WITH HER, AND--
...AND SHE DIDN'T COME DOWN FOR DINNER...
HUH? ME? UH, Y'KNOW, JUST UP TO SEE...
WHO ?!
THIS IS AWFUL... BELL-DANDY... SHE WAS CRYING!
MAN... NOW I KNOW HOW THE ASPHALT FEELS.
OW!
OUCH!
BECAUSE THAT WOULD IMPLY THAT YOU COMPLETELY IGNORED MY SPECIAL RULE BOOK!
OTAKU'S SPECIAL RULE BOOK
by Otaku
I HOPE YOU WEREN'T ABOUT TO SAY "BELL-DANDY"!
HUH?

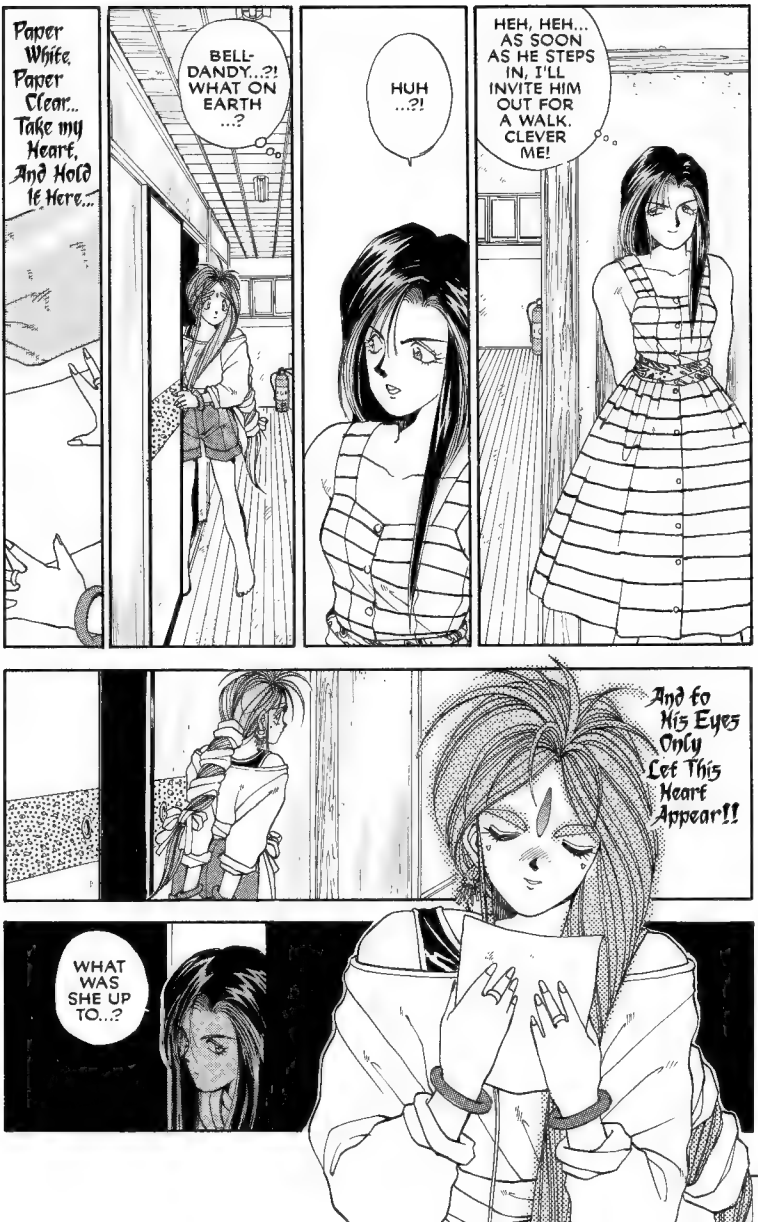
WOW! YOU'RE RIGHT! IT IS IN THERE!
LET'S ALL CROSS THE RIVER FOR A HAPPY SUMMER RETREAT!
SCHEDULE FOR DAY ONE
No men (especially Keiichi) are to be allowed in the women's quarters under any circumstances!
LOOK HERE! PARAGRAPH 12, SECTION F, SUBHEAD 14.4.7!!
!
BUT COULD I APPLY FOR SOME KIND OF... EXEMPTION?
HEY, GUYS! IT'S A FIGHT!
NEVER !!
CONGRATULATIONS! NOW GET OFF, I GOTTA SEE HER!
FIGURED OUT THE SCHEDULE! DREW CUTE LITTLE PICTURES!
I EVEN MADE SURE I SPELLED YOUR NAME CORRECTLY!
EXEMPTION? EXEMPTION? I PULLED THREE ALL-NIGHTERS MAKING THAT THING!!
BRRRP
BRRRP

DAT'S FIFTY OUT, AN' FIFTY BACK IN! OVER DA TOUGHEST STRETCH O' BEACH IN A NATION ENTIRELY SURROUNDED BY WATER! SO DON'T GET KILLED...OR I'LL MOIDER YA!!
BRAPPAP
OKAY, YOUSE GUYS! WE RENTED DESE HERE QUADS FER OUR FIFTY-KLICK OFF-ROAD BEACH RALLY!!
THUNK THUNK
IT'S ONLY TEN A.M. NOW, SO WE SHOULD BE BACK BY THREE, RIGHT ....?
NO MATTER WHAT, I'VE GOT TO TALK TO HER TODAY...
I COULDN'T EVEN FIND HER LAST NIGHT!
BRAPPppp
...
MOVE OUT!
I REALLY WANT TO SEE HER...
BRRR

BLOOSH
HEY, TAMIYA!
HONDA
DID YOU CHECK HOW DEEP THIS IS?!
WHAD-DAYOU... SHORT ?!
AIEE! THIS HILL'S TOO STEEP!
IT'S CALLED DA GAS PEDAL!
W-WE GOTTA DRIVE DOWN THAT?!
DAT.
BRAPP

OKAY...SO DERE WAS SOME WIPEOUTS! BUT WIT' ANTISEPTIC ON DEM CONTUSIONS, IT ALL BECOMES GOOD CLEAN FUN!
NONE UV YA GOT KILLED TODAY! DAT'S GREAT!!
groan
God... it took ten hours!
wheeze
gasp
THOSE WEREN'T "WIPE-OUTS"... THOSE WERE ATROCI-TIES!
OW!
BUT TOMORROW AIN'T GONNA BE AS EASY!! WE LEAVE AT DAWN!!
SHE'S GOING TO GIVE UP ON ME! SHE'LL LEAVE!
goodbye
WHAT ?!
DIG IN!

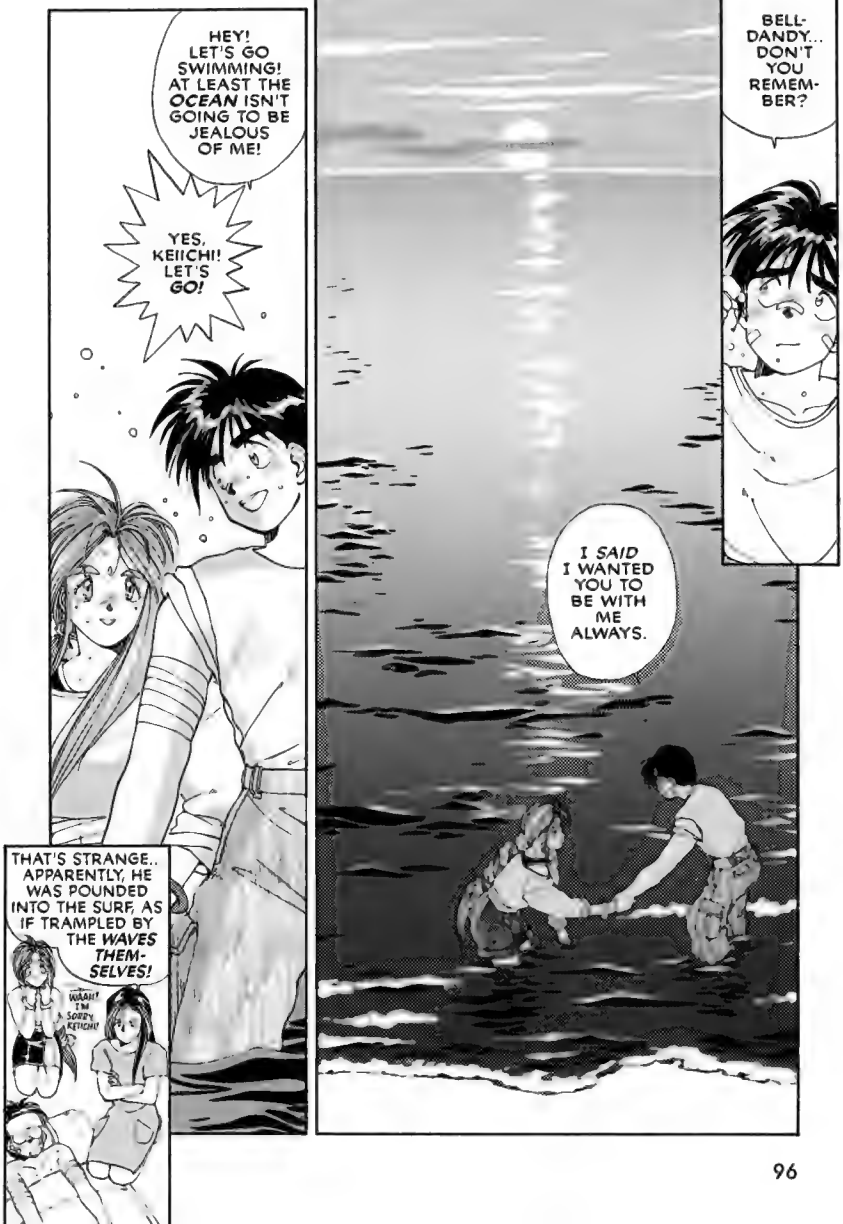
YEAH. ME TOO.
...I'M OUTTA RICE.
YES ...?
UM... BELL-DANDY ...?
YEAH. ME TOO!
...I'M OUTTA SOUP.
MORE RICE!
YES!
huh?
heh
ARGH!! IT'S TWO A.M.!!
AND THE DAY AFTER THAT
JUMP THAT? IMPOS-SIBLE!
THE DAY AFTER THAT
NO IT AIN'T! IT'S JUST EXTREMELY UNLIKELY!
BUT!
BUT!
OKAY, MEN! DINNER'S OVER! TIME TA DRINK LIKE COLLEGE STUDENTS !!
NEXT DAY
NEVER MIND DAT! PUSH THROUGH!
GROAN! MY HEAD!
BUT... THE COWS !!
moo...?

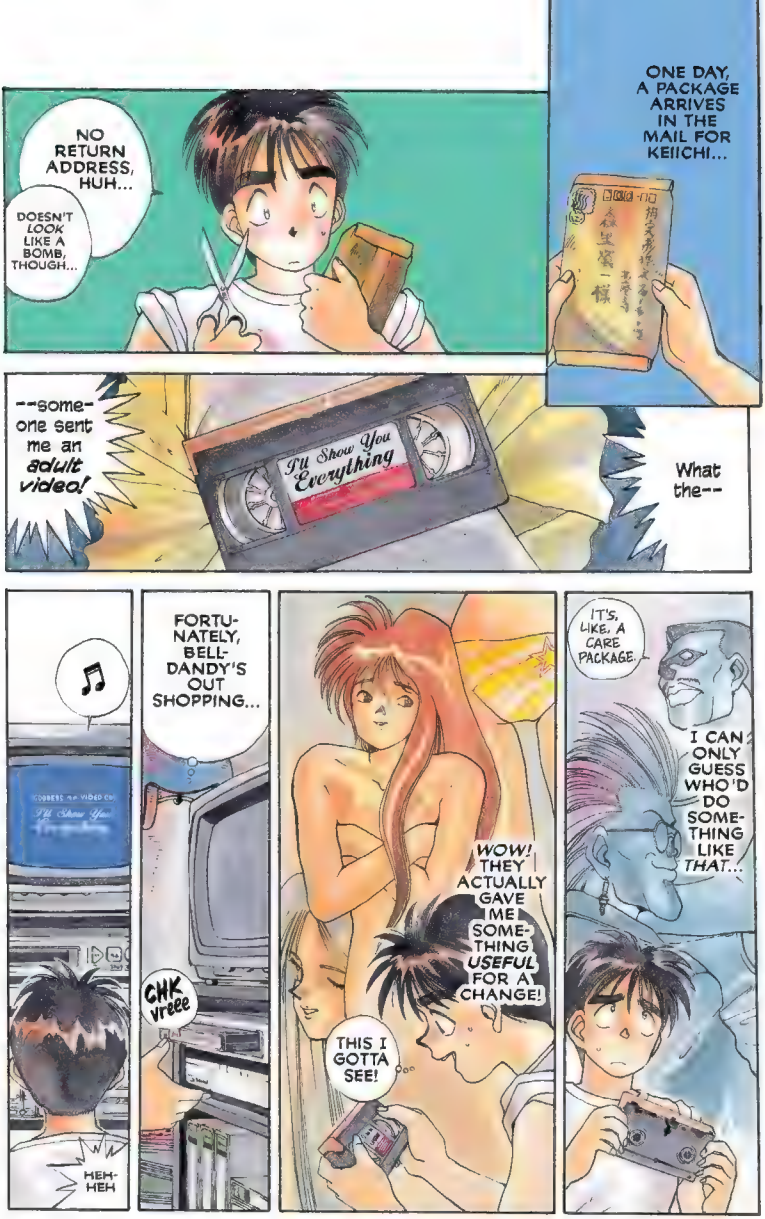

Paper White, Paper Clear... Take my Heart, And Hold It Here...
BELL-DANDY...?! WHAT ON EARTH ...?
HUH ...?!
HEH, HEH... AS SOON AS HE STEPS IN, I'LL INVITE HIM OUT FOR A WALK. CLEVER ME!
And to His Eyes Only Let This Heart Appear!!
WHAT WAS SHE UP TO...?

OH, WHAT SHALL I DO...?
HMM...
HUH?! IT'S BLANK!
LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF NOTE...
KEIICHI! GREAT! YOU'RE FINALLY BACK! LET'S GO FOR A WALK!
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT ?!
AT LEAST, IT WAS ON YOUR PILLOW!
I THINK THIS IS FOR YOU.
WH-WHAT ...?
SAY...
HUH...MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE ASKED BELL TO DO THIS.

THAT SHOULD THROW HIM... SHE WROTE YOU AN EMPTY LOVE NOTE!
OH, WOW !!
To my Keiichi, I'll be waiting for you west of the treehouse, until the morning sun
Belldandy
...WHERE'D HE GO?
I DON'T GET IT.
hmph
!!
HEY!
TOO WEIRD FOR ME!

HEY!
SO... YOU STILL WANT TO BE WITH ME?
koff
SPLOSH


BELL-DANDY... DON'T YOU REMEM-BER?
I *SAID* I WANTED YOU TO BE WITH ME ALWAYS.
HEY! LET'S GO SWIMMING! AT LEAST THE *OCEAN* ISN'T GOING TO BE JEALOUS OF ME!
YES, KEIICHI! LET'S *GO!*
THAT'S STRANGE.. APPARENTLY, HE WAS POUNDED INTO THE SURF, AS IF TRAMPLED BY THE *WAVES THEM-SELVES!*
WAAH! I'M SORRY, KEICHI!


ONE DAY, A PACKAGE ARRIVES IN THE MAIL FOR KEIICHI...
NO RETURN ADDRESS, HUH...
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A BOMB, THOUGH...
What the--
--some-one sent me an adult video!
I'll Show You Everything
HEH-HEH
CHK vreee
FORTU-NATELY, BELL-DANDY'S OUT SHOPPING...
WOW! THEY ACTUALLY GAVE ME SOME-THING USEFUL FOR A CHANGE!
THIS I GOTTA SEE!
IT'S, LIKE, A CARE PACKAGE
I CAN ONLY GUESS WHO'D DO SOME-THING LIKE THAT...

...GO?
Plip
WOW! HOW FAR DO THOSE LEGS...

CHAPTER 14

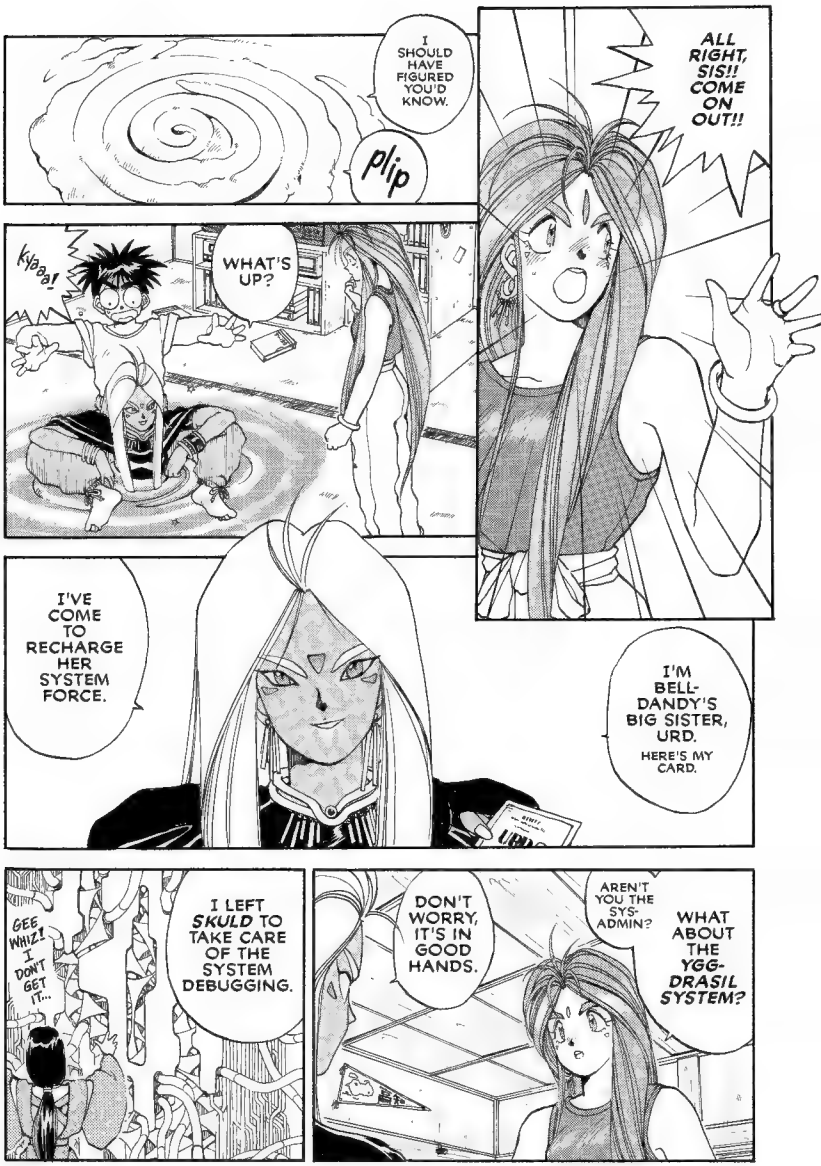
Oh My Older Sister!

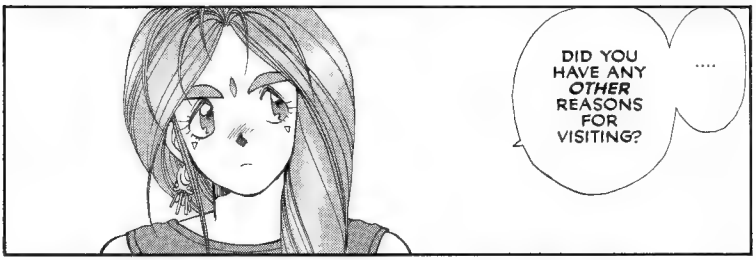
WHAM
oof
um...
OOPS!
YEAH.
huh?
uh?
uh?
owww...
HUH?

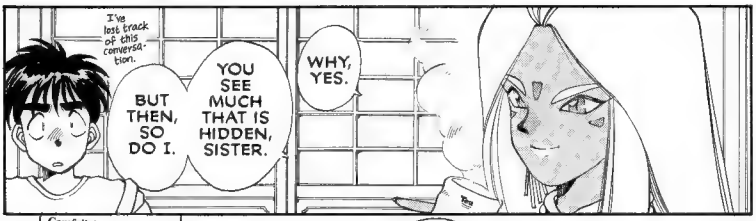
NOW WHAT? ONE LOOK AND SHE'LL KNOW THIS WAS ALL MY FAULT!
ARE YOU HOME?
SHE'S BACK!!
KEIICHI ..!
WOW... HE'S A MESS!
CONCEAL!
tssh
KEIICHI...? WHERE ARE YOU?

KEIICHI!!
SORRY, KEIICHI... I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO PLAY YOUR MEMORY BACK.
HE SEEMS A LITTLE CONFUSED.
HM?
WHAT HAP-PENED?!
IN THE TV I PUT A WOMAN AND A VIDEO CAME OUT?

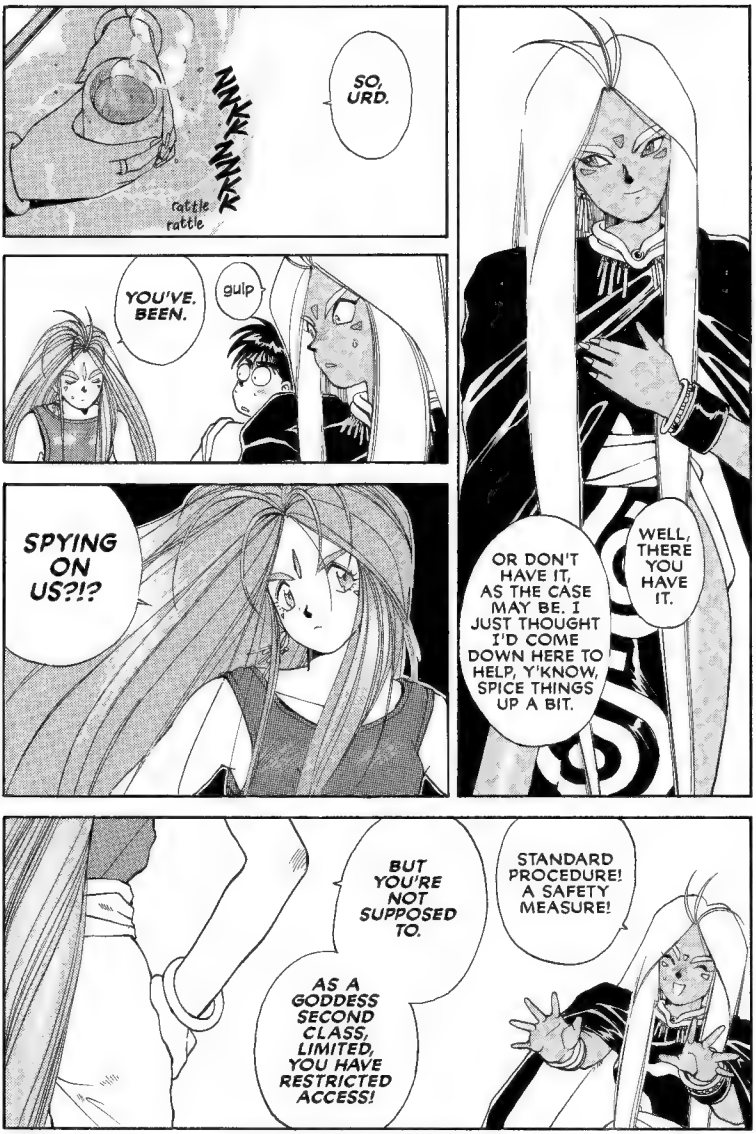
whhhhhhh
rrrrrrrr
HM?
FRAME ADVANCE!
HA!
WELL!
HUH? WHA' HAPPEN?
....
click


I SHOULD HAVE FIGURED YOU'D KNOW.
plip
ALL RIGHT, SIS!! COME ON OUT!!
kyaaa!
WHAT'S UP?
I'VE COME TO RECHARGE HER SYSTEM FORCE.
I'M BELL-DANDY'S BIG SISTER, URD.
HERE'S MY CARD.
GEE WHIZ! I DON'T GET IT...
I LEFT SKULD TO TAKE CARE OF THE SYSTEM DEBUGGING.
DON'T WORRY, IT'S IN GOOD HANDS.
AREN'T YOU THE SYS-ADMIN?
WHAT ABOUT THE YGGDRASIL SYSTEM?


DID YOU HAVE ANY OTHER REASONS FOR VISITING?
....


I've lost track of this conversation.
BUT THEN, SO DO I.
YOU SEE MUCH THAT IS HIDDEN, SISTER.
WHY, YES.

Casually!
Carefully!
LET'S SEE... HMM... LOOKIE, LOOKIE, LOOKIE...
...NOPE, NO NOOKIE.
SO, IF YOU SAY, NO, WELL... I UNDERSTAND. BUT,
LUB-DUP
BLOOD PRESSURE 170/100 AND RISING!
OH, YEAH, I ALSO COUNTED TWO CASES WHERE YOU HELD HANDS, IF YOU WANT TO THROW THAT IN.
IN FACT, HERE'S MY SPY REPORT ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP THUS FAR.
KEIICHI AND BELLDANDY: INTIMATE CONTACTS
4 holding at arm's length
2 arms around shoulder
1 bed sharing (unintentional)
1 lying in lap (man conscious)
1 lying on bosom (man unconscious)
5 hugs
1 kiss (elbow)
1 kiss (cheek)
1 kiss (mouth; unable to confirm tongue)
NNNT


SO, URD.
NNKR NNKR
rattle rattle
YOU'VE. BEEN.
gulp
SPYING ON US?!?
WELL, THERE YOU HAVE IT.
OR DON'T HAVE IT, AS THE CASE MAY BE. I JUST THOUGHT I'D COME DOWN HERE TO HELP, Y'KNOW, SPICE THINGS UP A BIT.
STANDARD PROCEDURE! A SAFETY MEASURE!
BUT YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO.
AS A GODDESS SECOND CLASS, LIMITED, YOU HAVE RESTRICTED ACCESS!

HAND OVER THAT TAPE!
SHIELD UP!
oh!
uh
BZZAP BZZAP
Just keep... crawling to safety...

WHAT A DAY THIS TURNED OUT TO BE...
WHEW...
IT'S NOT THAT SHE ISN'T GOR-GEOUS...
!!
...BUT SHE SURE ISN'T ANYTHING LIKE BELL--
KCHAK

OH-- SO HE'S THE ONE HOLDING UP THE RELATION-SHIP.
IN THEORY, YES! HOWEVER, NO THANK YOU!
HEY.
COULD I SCRUB YOUR BACK ...?
HE IS IGNO-RANT, THIS ONE.
towel? towel?
Morisato-kun ...?
I MUST TEACH HIM.

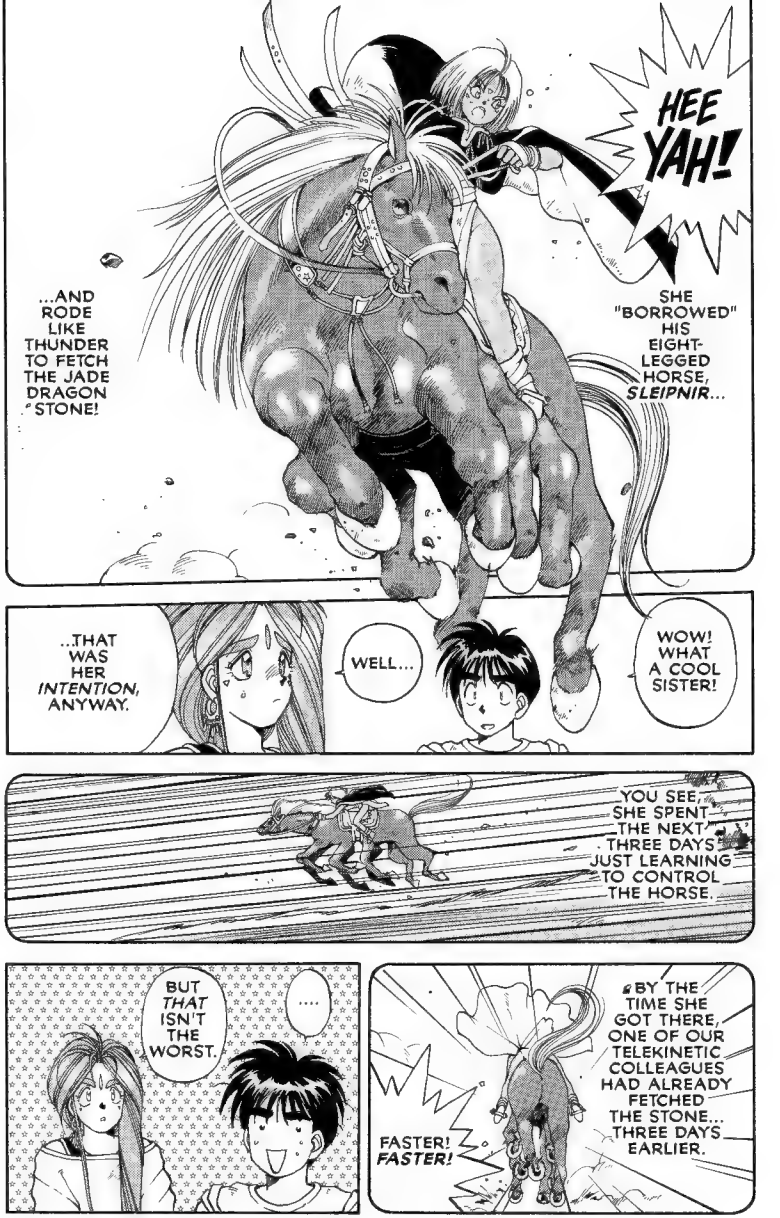
CAN I Scrub Your Back ...?
Let Me Rephrase That.
Y'know... I'd really like it if you'd do that.
Yeah, sure.
...and yet... some voice holds me back...
KEIICHI!
SPLASH
...obey Urd.
obey Urd... obey Urd... and in case of doubt...
GOOD.
THEN BE A GOOD BOY AND HOP OUT, OKAY?
right.
okay.

KYA KYA!
"kyaaa"?
Let's see... no physiological problems...
HUH ?!
...Beli-dandy?
KEI-ICHI!
REALLY, NOW. DON'T BE SHY.
COME ON. COME TO URD. C'MON.
WHAT IS IT WITH THIS DWEEB? FULL POWER!
....
MOVE IT!
snake quiver
right. okay.

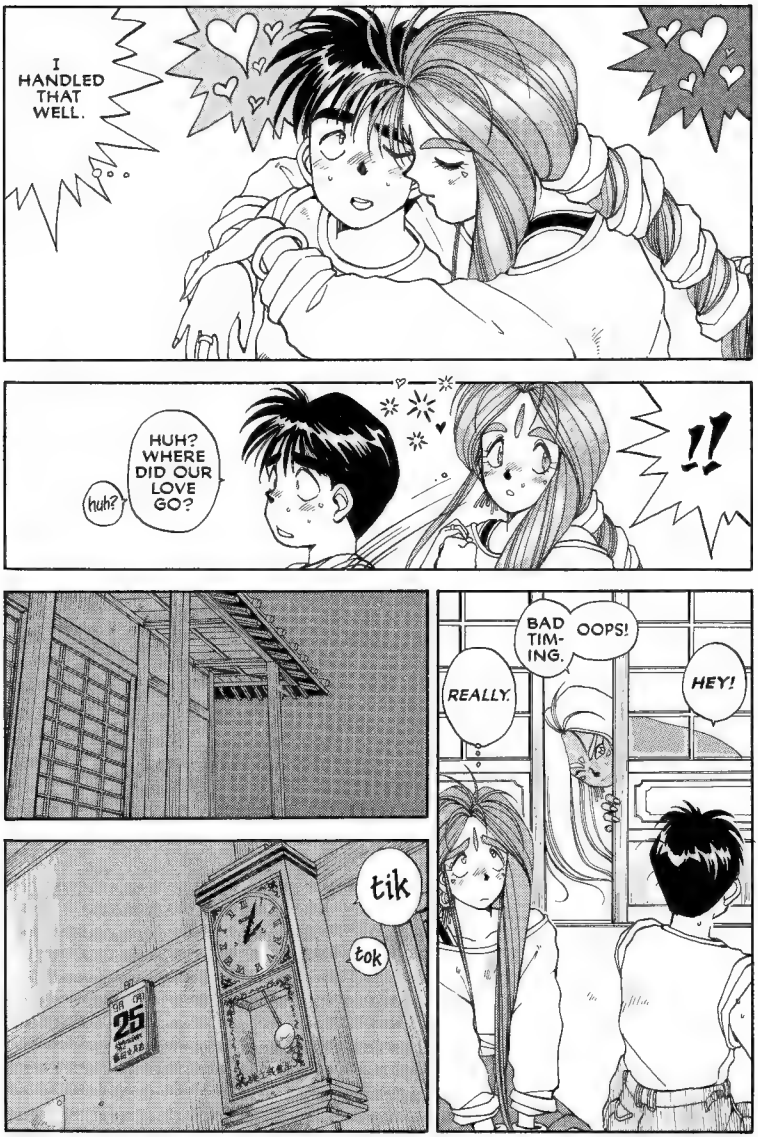
BUT WHAT IF BELL-DANDY SEES US?!
CAN'T FIGHT... THE URD CRAVING...
OH, FOR ★%#!!
FWAK
SMACK
MAKE UP YOUR MIND!

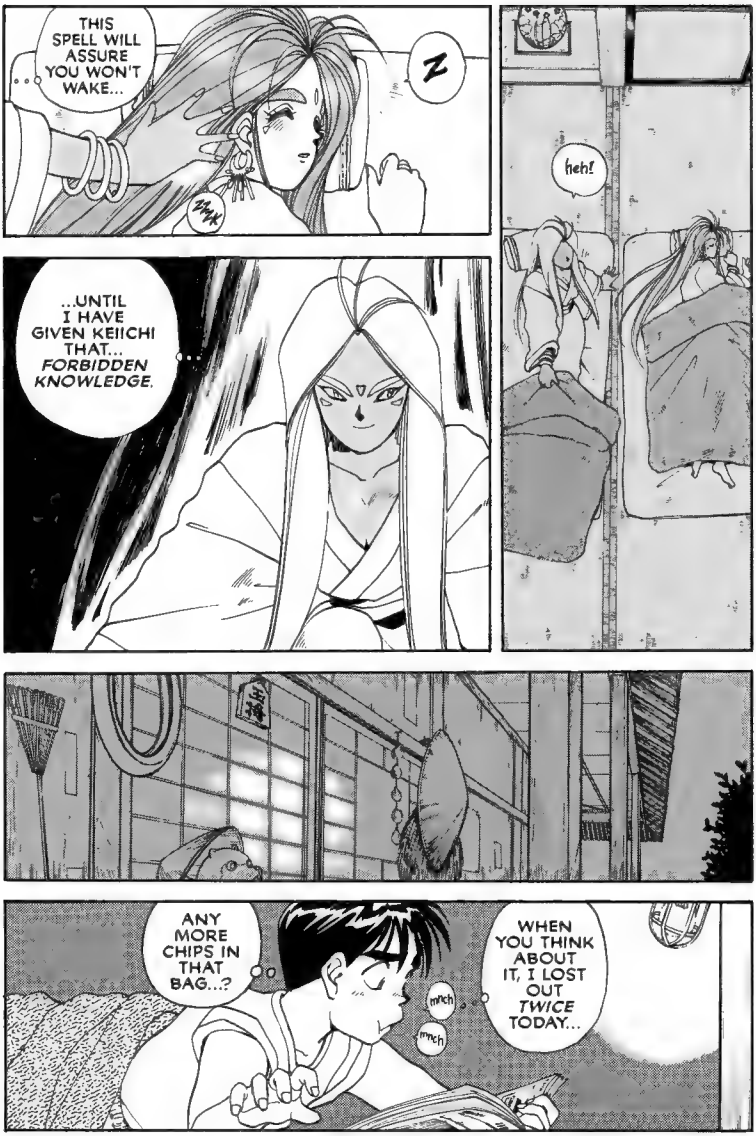
I dunno how it was for *him*, but I feel good!
!!
WHAT WAS *THAT*?!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL, KEIICHI.
NYA HA HA
MY SISTER TENDS TO THINK THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS.
BUT THEN SHE GETS SO WRAPPED UP IN THE *MEANS* SHE FORGETS WHAT THE *END* WAS.
BELL-DANDY!
THERE WAS THIS ONE TIME WHEN I FELL ILL...
Her end justifies her means? Her means justifies her end?
URD IS VERY... *PASSION-ATE*... ABOUT *EVERY-THING* SHE DOES.

WAIT! THAT ISN'T--
I'LL GO GET IT!! ME!!
eh?
ONLY THE JADE DRAGON STONE OF THE EAST CAN HEAL HER...
AND...
hahh
hahh
THEN SHE WENT STRAIGHT TO THE PALACE OF THE ALMIGHTY...
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK, OKAY?
HEY! WHAT TH-?! YOU CAN'T TAKE-- STOP!!
THRUDD

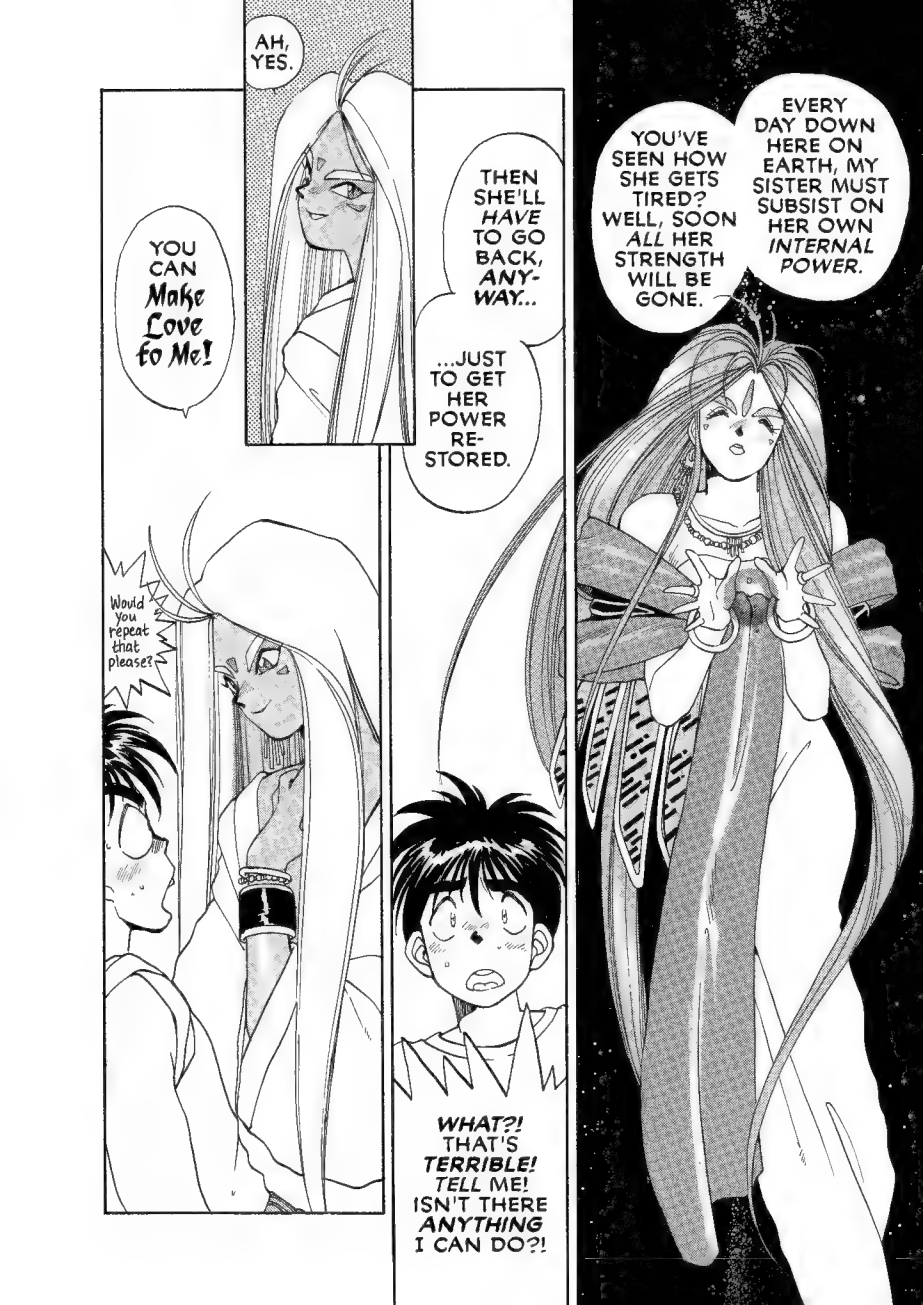

HEE YAH!
SHE "BORROWED" HIS EIGHT-LEGGED HORSE, SLEIPNIR...
...AND RODE LIKE THUNDER TO FETCH THE JADE DRAGON STONE!
WOW! WHAT A COOL SISTER!
WELL...
...THAT WAS HER INTENTION, ANYWAY.
YOU SEE, SHE SPENT THE NEXT THREE DAYS JUST LEARNING TO CONTROL THE HORSE.
BY THE TIME SHE GOT THERE, ONE OF OUR TELEKINETIC COLLEAGUES HAD ALREADY FETCHED THE STONE... THREE DAYS EARLIER.
FASTER! FASTER!
....
BUT THAT ISN'T THE WORST.

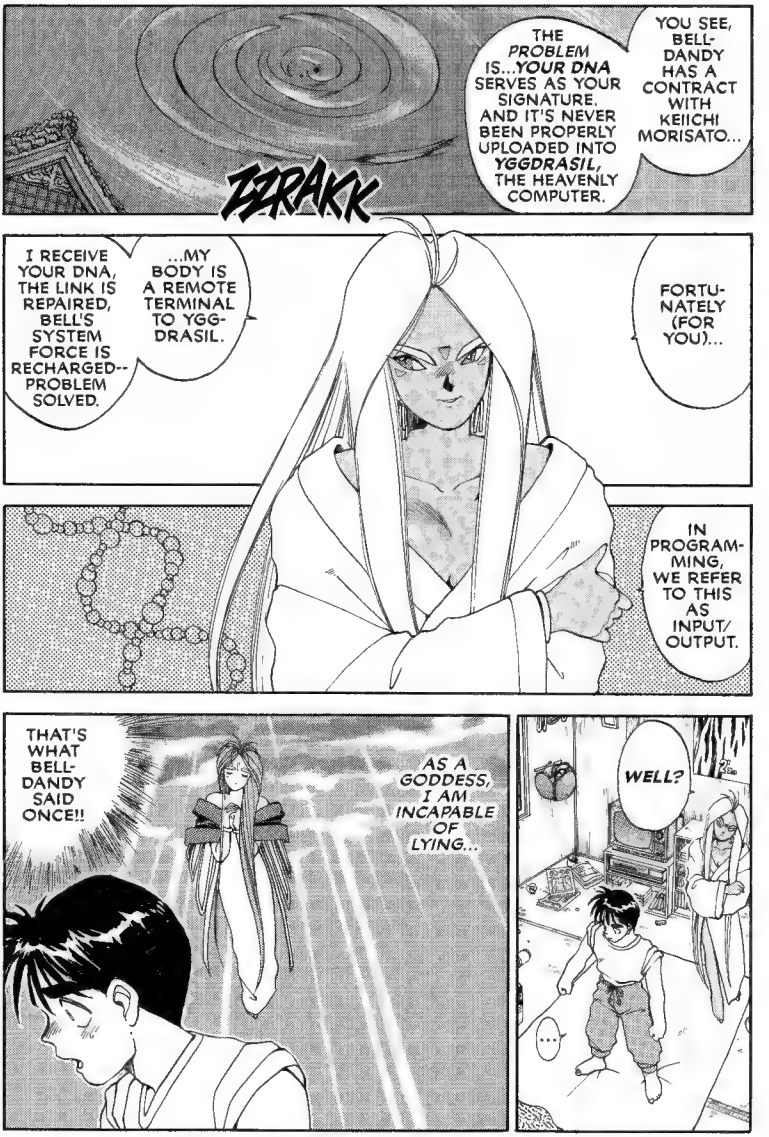
I JUST KEPT WEIGHING THE PULL OF HER TREMENDOUS POWER...
..AGAINST HOW MAD YOU'D LOOK.
HOW DID YOU DO IT?
IN FACT, I'M AMAZED YOU WERE ABLE TO RESIST HER!
WELL, SEE, IT WAS LIKE THIS...
SHE COULD WRECK THIS WHOLE CITY IF SHE WANTED.
SHE'S FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN I AM.
WELL... KINDA... SOMETIMES...
REALLY? AM I REALLY THAT SCARY?


I HANDLED THAT WELL.
!!
HUH? WHERE DID OUR LOVE GO?
huh?
BAD TIM-ING.
OOPS!
REALLY.
HEY!
tik
tok
25


THIS SPELL WILL ASSURE YOU WON'T WAKE...
Z
ZZZZ
heh!
...UNTIL I HAVE GIVEN KEIICHI THAT... FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE.
ANY MORE CHIPS IN THAT BAG...?
mmch
mmch
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, I LOST OUT TWICE TODAY...

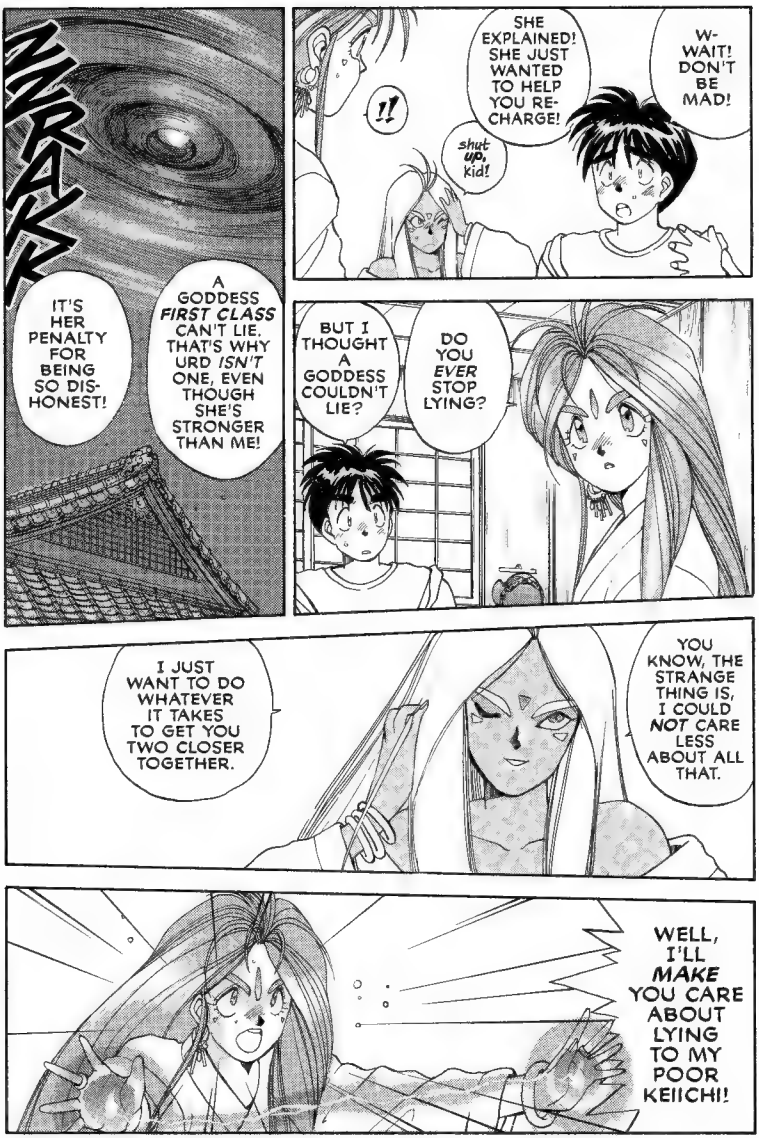
BUNS? MARSH-MALLOWS ...?
HM? THOSE AREN'T CHIPS. IT FEELS FIRM, YET YIELDING.
SQUISH
PLEASE BE GENTLE.
OH, MY.
!!
YOU DO WANT TO KEEP BELL-DANDY AROUND... DON'T YOU...?
eep eep
LOOK, LET ME PUT THIS AS SIMPLY AS I CAN, KEIICHI.
DID I TELL YOU TO REMOVE YOUR HAND?
eep


EVERY DAY DOWN HERE ON EARTH, MY SISTER MUST SUBSIST ON HER OWN *INTERNAL* POWER.
YOU'VE SEEN HOW SHE GETS TIRED? WELL, SOON *ALL* HER STRENGTH WILL BE GONE.
WHAT?! THAT'S *TERRIBLE!* *TELL* ME! ISN'T THERE *ANYTHING* I CAN DO?!
THEN SHE'LL *HAVE* TO GO BACK, *ANY-WAY*...
...JUST TO GET HER POWER RE-STORED.
AH, YES.
YOU CAN *Make Love to Me!*
Would you repeat that please?


ZZRAKK
YOU SEE, BELL-DANDY HAS A CONTRACT WITH KEIICHI MORISATO...
THE PROBLEM IS...YOUR DNA SERVES AS YOUR SIGNATURE. AND IT'S NEVER BEEN PROPERLY UPLOADED INTO YGGDRASIL, THE HEAVENLY COMPUTER.
FORTU-NATELY (FOR YOU)...
...MY BODY IS A REMOTE TERMINAL TO YGG-DRASIL.
I RECEIVE YOUR DNA, THE LINK IS REPAIRED, BELL'S SYSTEM FORCE IS RECHARGED--PROBLEM SOLVED.
IN PROGRAM-MING, WE REFER TO THIS AS INPUT/OUTPUT.
THAT'S WHAT BELL-DANDY SAID ONCE!!
AS A GODDESS, I AM INCAPABLE OF LYING...
WELL?
...

RIGHT.
...hm?
t.ingg
OH, NO.
URD!
tingg

NOW IT'S BEEN TRIGGERED... AND I'VE TAKEN HIM OVER.
THE FOOL DOESN'T EVEN REALIZE I PLANTED A VIRUS SPELL ON HIM BACK THERE IN THE BATHROOM.
JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING ?!
WHAM
urk
URD !!
THE REALM OF THE SENSES AWAITS YOU, SONNY.
...do it.
do it for Bell... do it for Bell... just...


NNRAR
IT'S HER PENALTY FOR BEING SO DISHONEST!
A GODDESS *FIRST CLASS* CAN'T LIE. THAT'S WHY URD *ISN'T* ONE, EVEN THOUGH SHE'S STRONGER THAN ME!
W-WAIT! DON'T BE MAD!
SHE EXPLAINED! SHE JUST WANTED TO HELP YOU RECHARGE!
!!
shut up, kid!
DO YOU *EVER* STOP LYING?
BUT I THOUGHT A GODDESS COULDN'T LIE?
I JUST WANT TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET YOU TWO CLOSER TOGETHER.
YOU KNOW, THE STRANGE THING IS, I COULD *NOT* CARE LESS ABOUT ALL THAT.
WELL, I'LL *MAKE* YOU CARE ABOUT LYING TO MY POOR KEIICHI!

HA HA HA! *TEST* YOUR POWER AGAINST MINE! BUT YOU'LL BE SORRY--
FUNNKK
SNAKK
uhh

THAT WASN'T ME!
JEEZ, BELL... WASN'T THAT A LITTLE SEVERE?!
...
crackle
splitt
LOOK! WRITING, BURNED INTO THE FLOOR!
SO, THEN... WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN AROUND HERE?
WAIT FOR YOU TO LEAVE.
"...USER URD IS HEREBY BANNED FROM HEAVEN UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!"
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
YOU MEAN...SHE ARRANGED THIS WHOLE THING?
um...IT'S AN ERROR MESSAGE. "RECENT SYSTEM CRASH DUE TO VIOLATION OF SERVICE TERMS BY USER GODDESS SECOND CLASS (LIMITED) URD.."

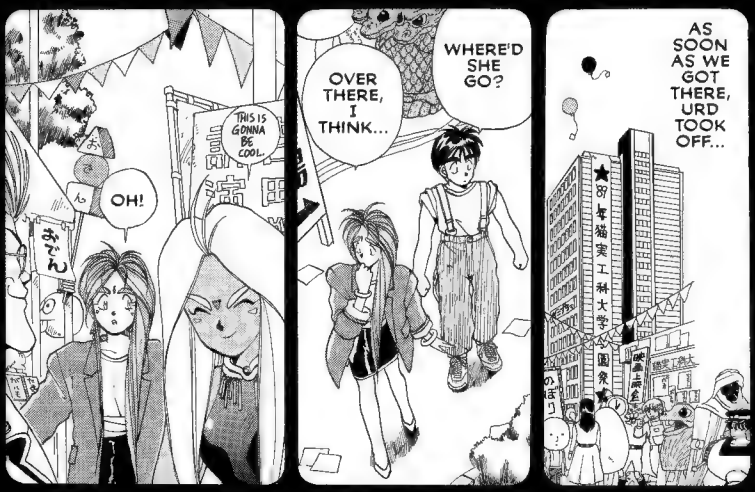
大放出
猫実ナイト大
猫実
撫
金すくい
THAT WAS MISS SACHIYO KUMADA!
AND COMING UP NEXT...
LET'S GIVE HER A BIG HAND, FOLKS!

THE NEKOMI MOTOR CLUB
Presents
The Campus Queen Contest
Poise! Congeniality!
ASE CERTIFIED
...163 cm... 83-59-84...
YES... IT MUST BE THE SWIMSUIT COMPETITION... FIRST UP, MISS SAYOKO MISHIMA...
ONE NAME, BUT THREE SIZES... 90-60-91!
NEXT, MISS... UH... URD! 165 cm HIGH...

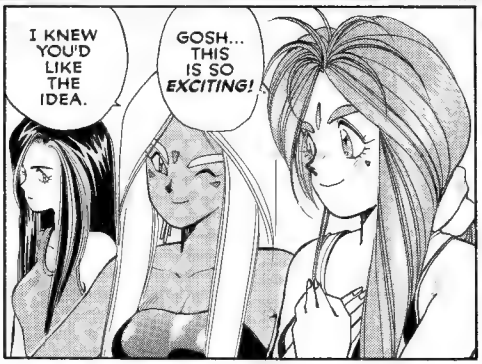
CHAPTER 15

I'm the Campus Queen

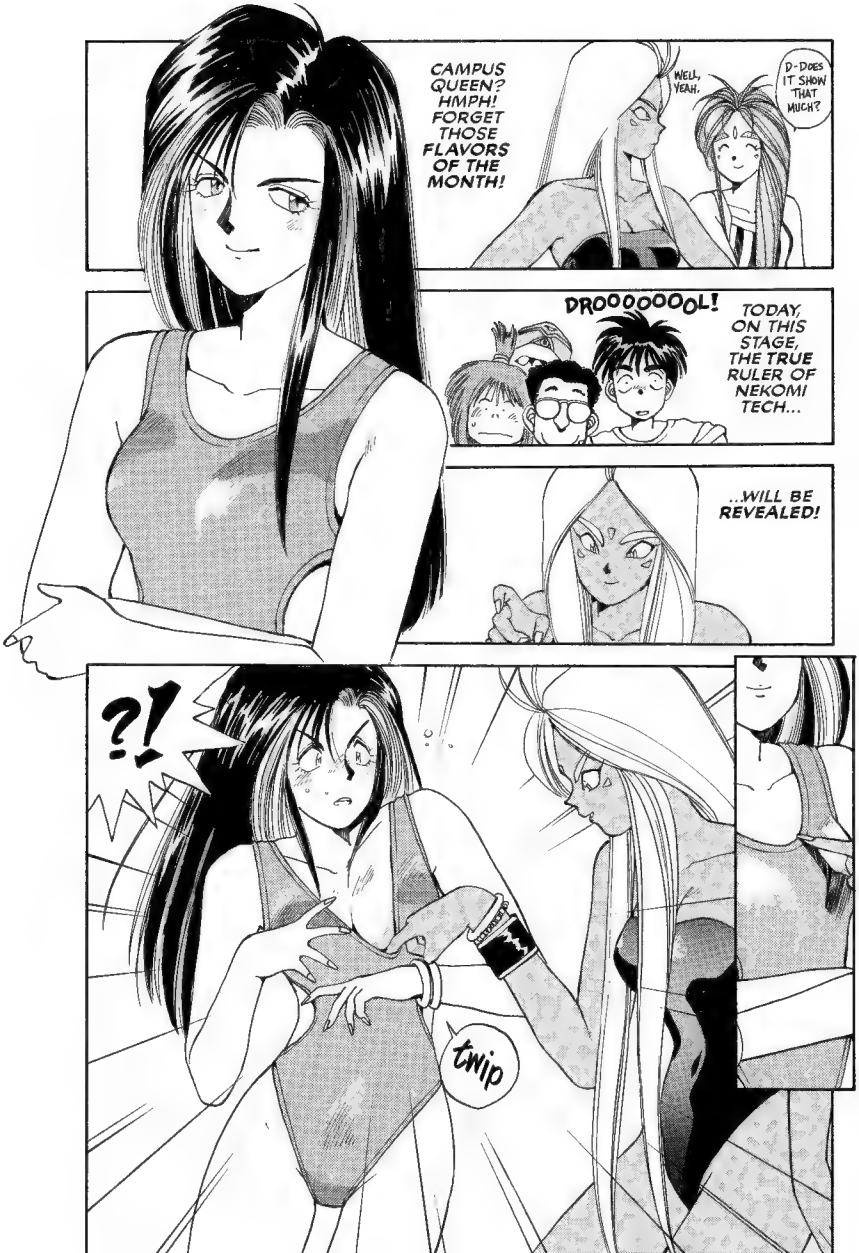
...EARLIER THAT DAY (REALLY EARLY, LIKE 6 A.M.)
HEY-- TODAY'S THAT... WHADDYA-CALL IT, CAMPUS FESTIVAL?
I WANNA GO!
I SENSE THAT URD'S PRESENCE MAY LEAD TO... COMPLI-CATIONS...
y'know?
THE MORE BABES THE BETTER!
y'know?
BUT KEIICHI SEEMS TO THINK IT'S OKAY...
HAWHAW
HAWHAW!
I'LL SHOW THESE MORTALS A FESTIVAL!
WELL, NOT SO MUCH "MAY LEAD" AS "WILL LEAD"...


AS SOON AS WE GOT THERE, URD TOOK OFF...
WHERE'D SHE GO?
OVER THERE, I THINK...
THIS IS GONNA BE COOL.
OH!

SISTER! YOU SHOULDN'T JUST GO BY YOUR-SELF--
AH... BUT I DIDN'T!
SEE? I ENTERED YOU IN THE CONTEST, TOO!


GOSH... THIS IS SO EXCITING!
I KNEW YOU'D LIKE THE IDEA.

IT COULD BE YOU!
CONTEST?
CAMPUS QUEEN
WHO'LL BE OUR CINDERELLA?
A MOTOR CLUB EVENT
CO-SPONSOR: VIDEO CLUB


CAMPUS QUEEN? HMPH! FORGET THOSE FLAVORS OF THE MONTH!
WELL, YEAH.
D-DOES IT SHOW THAT MUCH?
DROOOOOOOL!
TODAY, ON THIS STAGE, THE TRUE RULER OF NEKOMI TECH...
...WILL BE REVEALED!
?!
twip

NOW, NOW, MISS URD! NO TRYING FOR BONUS POINTS!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
WELL...
....
...MINE ARE BIGGER.
...I SENSE HER HOSTILITY...
HMM... FOR SOME REASON...
YOU HUMILIATED ME!
I'LL MAKE YOU PAY!
HONESTLY, URD!
HUSSY!
THERE'S MORE TO THIS GAME THAN... SIZE!
how...
...HOW DARE YOU!

...AND THAT WAS OUR SWIMSUIT CONTEST. NOW WE'LL SEE WHO'S BEST...
I THINK WE ALL WILL.
THREATENING ME... EVEN IN YOUR THOUGHTS? YOU'LL REGRET THIS!
WELL, HOW DARE YOU!
...IN BAGGY, GREASY OVERALLS!
FLOUNCING AROUND!
REALLY, MISS MISHIMA! THIS IS THE MOTOR CLUB!
SINGING! DANCING!
AFTER THE SWIMSUITS, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO GO TO THE TALENT CONTEST!
HEY, EVERYBODY!
WHOA! WAIT! HOLD ON A SECOND!
yes?

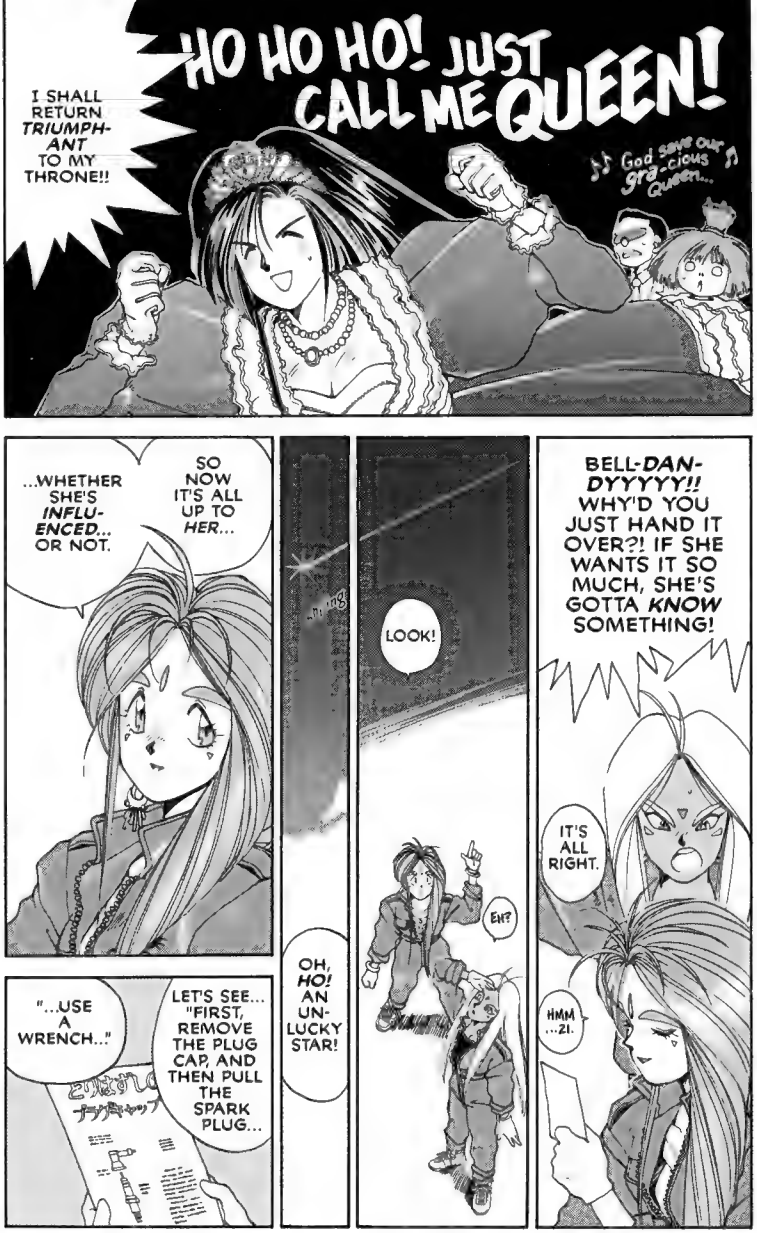
THE TALENT WE DEMAND...
...RUNS ON ANOTHER GEAR ENTIRELY!
OH, GOD...EVERY YEAR A DIFFERENT CLUB GETS TO RUN THE CAMPUS QUEEN CONTEST... AND I FORGOT... THESE GUYS ARE COMPLETELY INSANE!!
um...
WELL, THEY ONLY ACCEPTED ENTRANTS WHO HAD A MOTOR-CYCLE LICENSE...
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO NEXT?
TODAY'S CONTES-TANTS!
YOU WILL EACH SEE A BIKE BEFORE YOU!

WHAAAT ?!
...AS YOU WILL OBSERVE...
...ITS BROKEN PARTS ARE MARKED!
YOU WILL REPAIR IT ACCORDING TO THESE INSTRUCTIONS!
NEKOMI TEC MOTOR CL
MAINTENAN MANUAL
EXHAUSTIVE DETAILED
VOL. 1
SELF-
heh-heh
ASSURED
gulp
Doesn't quite grasp the situation
I'D BETTER IMPROVE THE ODDS...
HMM... THIS LOOKS BAD.
YES ...?
EX-CUSE ME!
OH!
I get it
女王様コンテス
um...
can I...

WE'LL RETURN AFTER A SHORT BREAK!
THE CAMPUS QUEEN CONTEST
Presented by the
SHE'S GOTTA GO TO THE BATH-ROOM!
HEY, WHICH ONE OF THOSE BIKES WILL BE EASIEST TO FIX?
UM... I'M REALLY NOT ALLOWED TO SAY...
YOU! YOU'RE FROM THE MOTOR CLUB, RIGHT?!
AH!
HM...
FIBE-MINI
OW
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LITERALLY TELL THE WHOLE SCHOOL.
I HAFF VAYS OF MAKING YOU TALK.
UH...
UH...

KYAAAAAA!
POP
LET THE TALENT CONTEST... BEGIN!
SSSSSMOOCH
FIRST, THEY MUST PICK A CARD.. ANY CARD!
N-NUMBER 18 IS R-R-RELATIVELY EASY...
18... 18...
IT'S THE LUCK OF THE DRAW!
SOME ARE EASY.. SOME WILL DRIVE THEM TO MAD-NESS...
I HOPE BELL CAN HANDLE THIS... IT'S NOT REALLY HER THING.
THEN THEY MUST REPAIR THE BIKE WITH THE MATCHING NUMBER!

OH! MINE'S 18!
LET'S SEE...
!
NO... 16... CLOSE...
HA!
HEY?! NO FAIR!
THAT WOMAN! SHE'S SO EVIL! SO SATANIC! LOOK HOW THE POWERS OF DARKNESS HELP HER!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? YOU LOOK A LITTLE PALE.
PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE! PLEEEASE CAN I HAVE THAT CARD?!? 'CAUSE... um... IT'S MY LUCKY NUMBER!
WELL... YES... ALL RIGHT...
18
MINE! ALL MINE!!


I SHALL RETURN TRIUMPH-ANT TO MY THRONE!!
HO HO HO! JUST CALL ME QUEEN!
♪♪ God save our gra-cious Queen...
...WHETHER SHE'S INFLU-ENCED... OR NOT.
SO NOW IT'S ALL UP TO HER...
"...USE A WRENCH..."
LET'S SEE... "FIRST, REMOVE THE PLUG CAP, AND THEN PULL THE SPARK PLUG...
OH, HO! AN UN-LUCKY STAR!
LOOK!
EH?
BELL-DAN-DYYYY!! WHY'D YOU JUST HAND IT OVER?! IF SHE WANTS IT SO MUCH, SHE'S GOTTA KNOW SOMETHING!
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
HMM ...21.

HERE... IS WHERE THE FLOW INSIDE IS DISRUPTED...
...
fuuuh
"...FILL TANK WITH GAS. DONE!"
"AFTER INSERTING THE NEW PLUG, REPLACE THE CAP, AND...
ACTUALLY, IT'S A PLUG SOCKET.
...HMM. THIS?
SPARK PLUG...
I BARELY RECOG-NIZE HALF THIS STUFF...
...
GENERATOR? IGNITION CABLE?
...?
MEAN-WHILE, URD...
...FOR EACH CARD IS A PIECE OF A PHOTO OF A CERTAIN PERSON!
YOU MUST RACE TO FIND THEM...
ignition... ignition... ??
CONCEALED ALL OVER THE FESTIVAL ARE VARIOUS CARDS!
...A RACE!
HUH ?!
EH?
YOU SEE, THE BIKES THAT ARE EASIEST TO FIX ARE ALSO THE SLOWEST TO RUN!
NOW, THE KICKER, FOLKS!
WHICH CAN ONLY MEAN... YES... YOU GUESSED IT... THE FINAL CONTEST IS... WAIT FOR IT... HEH-HEH...

WHICH BIKE IS MINE, AGAIN...?
WHY DIDN'T HE TELL ME BEFORE I GAVE HIM THE BRIBE?!
THERE'S A SHORT-CIRCUIT IN THIS COIL...
FIND THAT PERSON... AND THEN BRING THEM TO THE STAGE... TO WIN THE GAME!
SHAKK
NO TIME TO LOSE!
PUTT PUTT PUTT
HUH ?!
GO GO GO!!
PUTT PUTT PUTT
GRRR!
VRROOM
THIS IS DISGUSTING! EVERYONE'S GOT THEIR BIKE FIXED BUT ME AND BELL!
GRRR!

KSSHHHH
BRMMMMBBB
OH.
BOOT!
I GIVE UP!
LUCKY!
NSR 50
HONDA
I KNOW, BUT...
BELL-DANDY... YOU'RE LAST!
THIS BIKE IS THE HARDEST OF ALL TO FIX.
I CAN FEEL IT.
THIS PART SAYS IT NEEDS JUST A LITTLE MORE WORK...

...
HAW! HAW! THIS TIME FOR SURE!
THE CENTER PIECE NEVER MATCHES!
THIS IS THE FOURTH TIME!
THE CENTER PIECE NEVER MATCHES!
MAYBE I CAN FIND THEM FROM JUST THEIR CHIN...
COOL! NO ONE'S GOTTEN THE WHOLE PICTURE YET!
WELL... I GOT THE HAIR...
Möbius Ramen!
TIME... HEH-HEH!
STILL TIME FOR A SNACK...!
HM?

♪ danger! danger...! ♪♪
Mami Aida
LIVE IN CONCERT!
WOW...THESE PORTIONS ARE GENEROUS! IT'S ALMOST LIKE AN ENDLESS LOOP!
SHE'LL BE A WHILE.
SKUUUP!
OH... THERE THEY ARE!

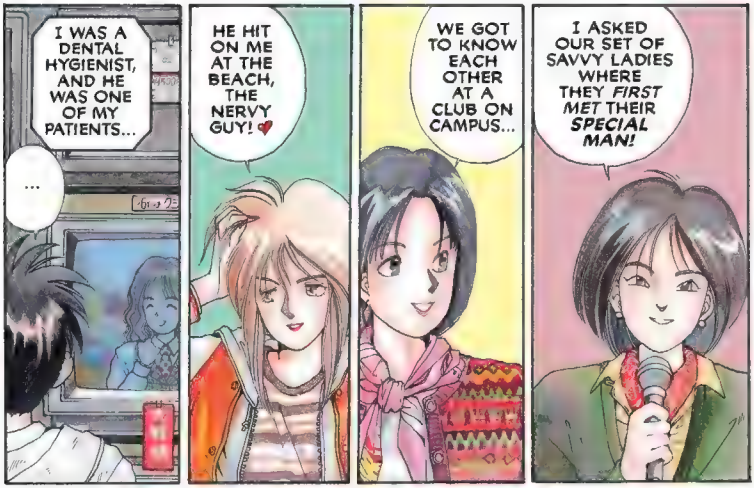
ENCORE!
ENCORE!
THANKS, KEIICHI!
GOOD LUCK!
DONE!
OH?
EH?
NOT FOR SALE

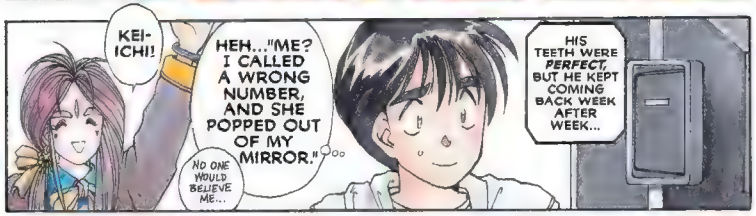
um...
...
OH!
SCOOP-A-SLUG
100 YEN A TRY!!
OH!
IT MEANS I GIVE YOU THE OTHER TWO PIECES IMMEDI-ATELY.
OH!
HMMM... THIS CHIN CARD IS SPECIAL!
REALLY? HOW?
IT'S THAT IDIOT!
IT'S MORI-SATO!
IT'S KEIICHI!
BRMMBBVRMBB
PUTT PUTT PUTT
WHAT THE-?
REALLY?! ARE YOU SURE?!
HEY! I SAW HIM BACK AT THE STARTING LINE!

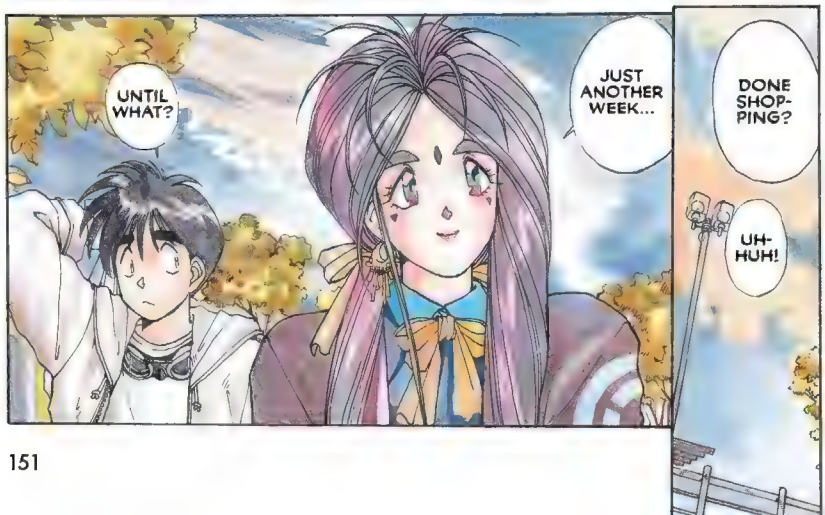
GET HIM !!
NSR 50
WHO? ME?!
I'LL BE RUN DOWN... RIPPED APART!!!
KEIICHI!
Chik
THE BIKE HAD NOT FORGOTTEN BELL-DANDY'S TENDERNESS TOWARDS IT...
HONDA

AND YOURS, SIR!
AND YOURS!
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY I SMASHED YOUR STALL!
...TO PAY HER BACK... I MUST TRY TO BE VERY, VERY FAST.
AND SO IT THOUGHT...
ALMOST THERE...
KRAHH
?!
GET YOUR HANDS OFF HIM!
SO... THIS IS HOW IT ENDS... NOT BAD, REALLY...
NO! HE'S MINE!

KEI-ICHIII!!
!!
SKRASSHORR
SPECIAL RUNNERS-UP... AND BAND-AGES...GO TO MISS URD AND MISS MISHIMA!
NEXT TIME, THE CROWN IS MINE!
BUT MEANWHILE... I'LL TAKE WHAT I CAN GET...
THIS YEAR'S CAMPUS QUEEN IS... MISS BELL-DANDY!!
EH? OH, MY...
R-REALLY ...??
THE WINNER!
HO!
huh?
WAS THAT FAST ENOUGH?

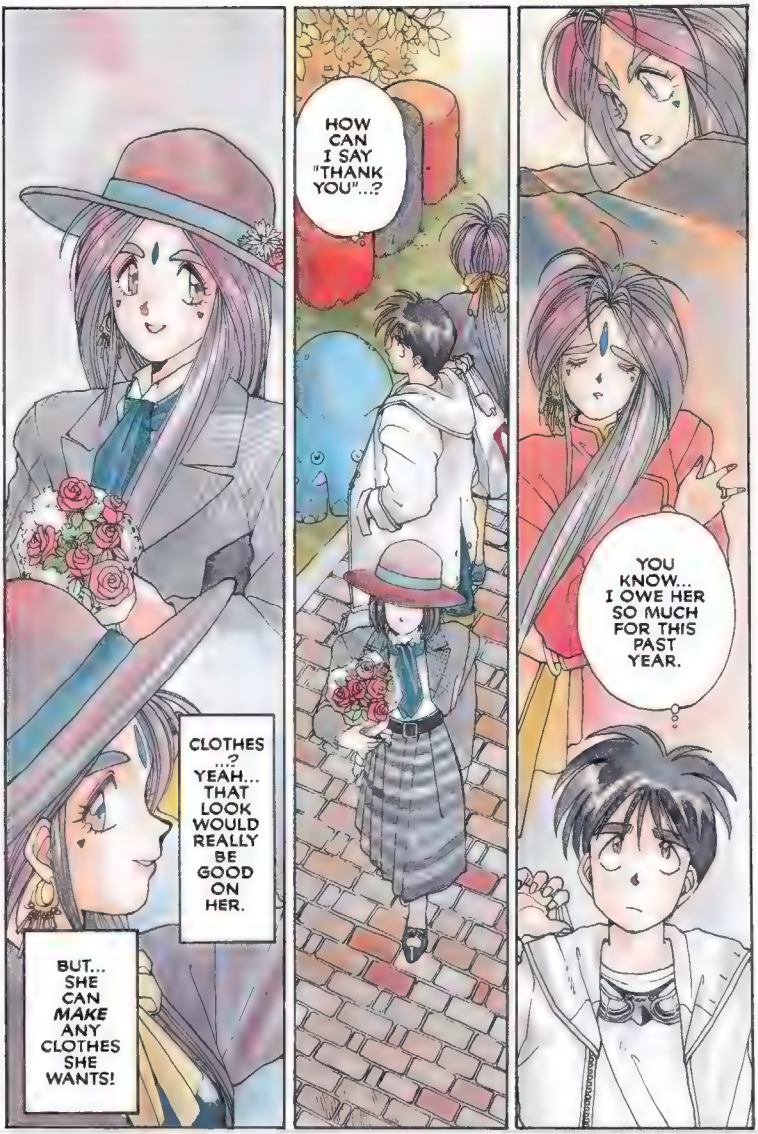

I WAS A DENTAL HYGIENIST, AND HE WAS ONE OF MY PATIENTS...
...
HE HIT ON ME AT THE BEACH, THE NERVY GUY!
WE GOT TO KNOW EACH OTHER AT A CLUB ON CAMPUS...
I ASKED OUR SET OF SAVVY LADIES WHERE THEY FIRST MET THEIR SPECIAL MAN!


KEI-ICHI!
HEH..."ME? I CALLED A WRONG NUMBER, AND SHE POPPED OUT OF MY MIRROR."
NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE ME...
HIS TEETH WERE PERFECT, BUT HE KEPT COMING BACK WEEK AFTER WEEK...


UNTIL WHAT?
JUST ANOTHER WEEK...
DONE SHOP-PING?
UH-HUH!

MY FIRST ANNIVERSARY ON EARTH.
HEY... YOU'RE RIGHT.

CHAPTER 13
What Belldandy Wants Most


YOU KNOW... I OWE HER SO MUCH FOR THIS PAST YEAR.
HOW CAN I SAY "THANK YOU"...?
CLOTHES ...? YEAH... THAT LOOK WOULD REALLY BE GOOD ON HER.
BUT... SHE CAN *MAKE* ANY CLOTHES SHE WANTS!

WHAT DO YOU GET A GODDESS...?
WE'RE HOME!
'EY, BRO! WELC'ME B'K!
YOU AGAIN?
OH, NO... I CAN'T! ❤ MIKA, MY LOVE!
SHE'S YOURS, PAL! GO FOR IT!
URD GOT BR'D... INVITED ME OV'R.
HEY... MAYBE I COULD ASK HER FOR SOME ADVICE...
WHAT SHOULD I GIVE A GIRL TO MAKE HER REALLY HAPPY?
FWMP

I DUNNO... A SYNTHE-SIZER?
A VIDEO CAMERA ...?
HOW 'BOUT A NIKON F-4? THAT'S GOOD!
OKAY, MEGUMI-- NOW PRETEND IT ISN'T FOR YOU!
HO HO HO!
YOU'RE SO NAIVE, MY DEAR.
WHAT MOST GIRLS WANT...
IS THRILLS! RO-MANCE!
A DEMON LOVER IN THE NIGHT!!

OKAY, URD-- NOW PRETEND IT ISN'T FOR YOU!
IF ONLY I KNEW SOME NORMAL WOMEN!
BE CASUAL... BE COOL...
YES?
ER... BELL-DANDY ...?
...WAIT! WHAT'S WRONG WITH JUST ASKING HER?
OH...HOW DID YOU KNOW? THERE IS SOMETHING I WANT...
um...um... um...IS THERE, Y'KNOW, ANYTHING YOU, uh, WANT? NOW?
JUST... uh...uh... WONDER-ING...
MAYBE MY INNER VOICE WASN'T BEING SARCASTIC!
SOY SAUCE.
I'M SORRY, BUT WE'RE ALL OUT. CAN YOU PLEASE GET ME SOME?
uh?
BRILLIANT, KEIICHI! EXACTLY THE WAY YOU SHOULD HAVE DONE IT!

HEH HEH... THIS IS GETTING INTER-ESTING!
MIKA, MARRY ME!
I CAN'T JUST HAND HER A BOTTLE OF SOY SAUCE AND SAY "THANKS FOR A YEAR OF BLISS, BELL-DANDY!"
BRMMMMMM
BRMM
THOUGHT I HEARD SOME-THING...
?
FWOOSH
HUH? WHERE'D URD GO?
I ALMOST FEEL LIKE IT'S... CRYING OUT TO ME...!
PLEASE BUY ME...
BUY ME...
BUY ME...
C'MON.. PLEEEZE...
IT'S ACTUALLY MORE LIKE A WHINE!
BUY ME... BUY ME...
WHERE ...?
THAT RING ...?!
YES! ME!
!!
-3C
ME!
-3C

?!
YES... FOR URD...
PLEASE... PLEASE...
BUY ME... BUY ME... FOR URD... BUY ME...
OH, YOU'RE TOO SHARP FOR ME, KEIICHI!
NOT!
ALL RIGHT, URD!! WHERE ARE YOU?!
...DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD LOOK BETTER ON BELLDANDY ...?
FWSH
BUT, LET ME ASK YOU...
OH, KEIICHI! IT'S SO BEAUTI-FUL...
HERE, BELL-DANDY.. FOR YOU...
BUT... ACTUALLY...
HUH... THAT WAS WEIRD...
FWSHSH

1.5 X 10^5?
NO!
YES...
YES...
THANK YOU, KEI-ICHI...
THEN, SHE'D SLIP IT ONTO HER FINGER...
-3¢
¥150,000-
-3¢
¥150,00
WHOOSH
150 THOUSAND?
ALL I NEED TO DO IS NOT EAT FOR FIVE MONTHS!
OH, LITTLE RING WITH THE BIG PRICE!

...SHOOT. SHE'S RIGHT. ONLY ONE MORE WEEK TO THE ANNIVERSARY.
OKAY... LET'S SEE. I'M SURE SHE CAME ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH...
....
....
2142857142857 YEN PER DAY...
I GOTTA MAKE A CALL.
OH ...?
RIGHT.
!
?
HMM... YOU MEAN TODAY...?
ALL RIGHT, URD... WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?

NEXT DAY
OKAY, KID...
...I DID SOME *THINKIN'*
GUESS I OWE YOU A FAVOR OR TWO.
SO I'LL LET *YOU* PINCH-HIT MY BEST PART-TIME JOB.
SO...IT'S SOMETHING WHERE I CAN MAKE A LOT OF MONEY... QUICK?
MAN, SO MUCH YOU WON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO LOOK!
WHAT *DOES THAT* MEAN?
HIS EMOTIONS ARE SO JUMBLED TOGETHER, I CAN'T EVEN MAKE OUT THEIR COLORS...
..WHY IS HE SO *WORRIED* ...?

OH.
1999 Secret Store
I KNOW WHERE NOT TO LOOK... DOWN.
!!
!!

IT'S JUST MY JOB! IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL!
WAIT!
FWAK
FWAK
PEEPING TOM!
EEK!
Pocky
OH.
THAT'S WHAT HE REALLY MEANT.
BOO
...
OING

YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE...
Secret Shoe
GRMB GRMB GRMB
Phweet!
6 TO 12, TRAFFIC CONTROL... 12 TO 6, LATE SHIFT...
THANK YOU... WE'RE ALWAYS OPEN!
BIG
FWMP
I'M HOME!

HE'S EXHAUST-ED!
G'NIGHT!
ZZZZZ
NUTTIN'! I SWEAR!
URD! PLEASE TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON!
TAKE MY WORD FOR IT... HE'S DOING A GUY THING.
...BUT I'M NOT THE ONE WHO CAN PUSH HIM SO HARD.
WELLLL... MAYBE I DID GIVE HIM AN IDEA...
SO JUST LET HIM DO IT... OKAY?
...

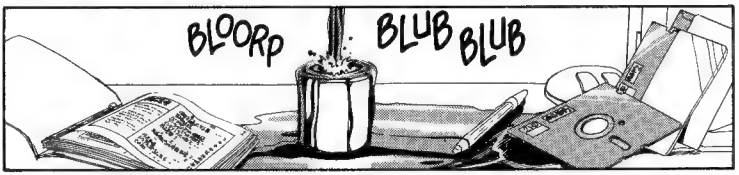
YOU DON'T KNOW YOURSELF ALL THAT WELL, DO YOU, SIS?
IF IT'S SOMETHING HE WANTS TO DO, THEN I SHOULD JUST LET HIM DO IT...
THIS TIME, I SENSE IT'S TRUE.
AND SO, KEIICHI'S DAYS OF SUFFERING CONTINUED!
RAISE! POUND! RAISE! POUND!
OMATSU
IT'S NO FUN... ALWAYS THINKING OF OTHER PEOPLE...
yawn
AND ON THAT NOTE...
GET HIM, GAME-RABBIT!
GNARR!
HAH! YOU CANNOT DEFEAT SUPER SPACE HEIJI!
GO, HEIJI!

SEE YOU TOMORROW, KEIICHI!
hahh
m-maybe...
hahh
gasp
wheeze
I-LOSING MY VOICE...
HNG!
HNG?
!?!
twitch
hahh
okay...
I...I CAN'T REACH THE ZIPPER!!
AMAZING! I'VE STILL GOT ONE BIT OF DIGNITY TO LOSE!
WELL... THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO...GO OUT IN THE STREET AND BEG A PASSERBY FOR HELP.
WELL, TECHNICALLY I CAN... BUT MY GIANT RABBIT PAWS ARE UNABLE TO WORK IT.
I CAN'T GET THROUGH THE DOOR!!
ENNI

sniff
B-BELL-DANDY ?!
Nnnip
JAGUA
...HAVE SOME TEA.
HERE...
D-DID YOU COME TO ASK WHY... um...
..WHY I'M WORKING SO HARD?
sighhh
HUH..? NO WAY!
YOU'RE NOT DOING SOMETHING BAD..?
I MEAN, IF IT WAS SOMETHING YOU HAD TO TELL ME..YOU WOULD HAVE, RIGHT?
NO.

THIS IS THE LAST STRETCH...
HI, BOSS!
OKAY...
猫
TONIGHT, BELL!
OF COURSE NOT.
ANYWAY, JUST LET ME KNOW... WHEN YOU CAN.
HEY, KEIICHI... YOU KNOW HOW TO USE COMPUTERS, RIGHT?
YEAH... A BIT.
I GOT SOME NEW INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN, BUT I CAN'T GET IT TO INSTALL...
HMM...
LOOKS LIKE A MEMORY ADDRESS CONFLICT.

OH KEIICHI I LOVE YOU!
JUST A LITTLE COFFEE TO KEEP ME GOING FOR THIS...

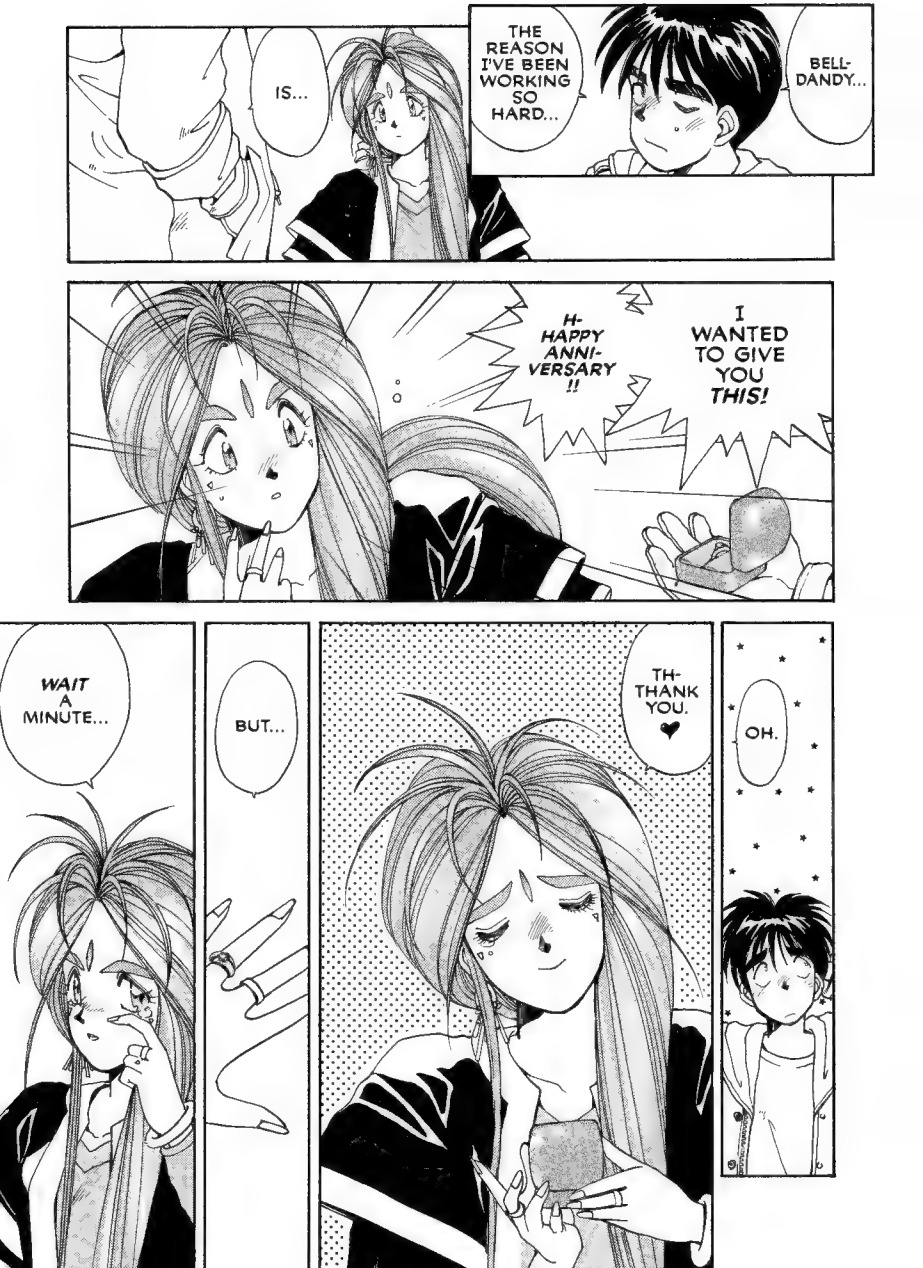

BLOORP
BLUB BLUB

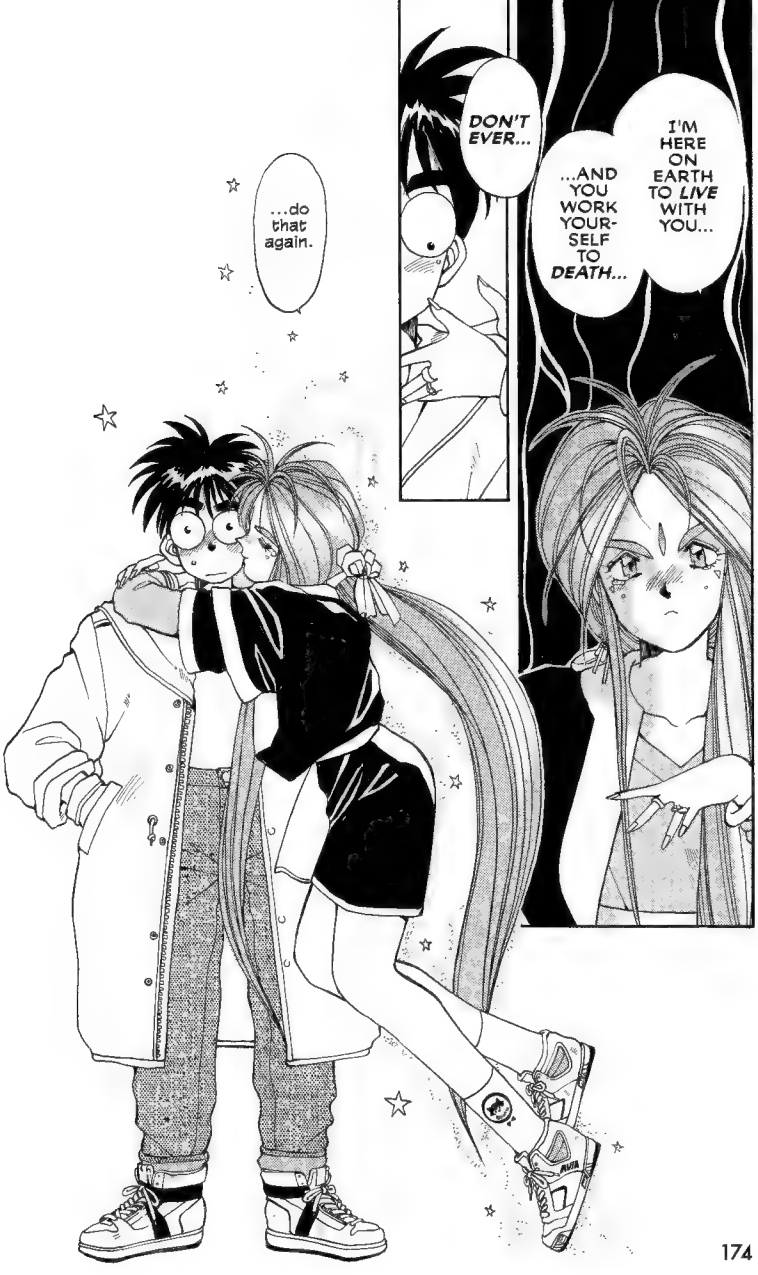
I HAD TO SIGN UP FOR A WHOLE OTHER WEEK OF WORK TO COVER IT.
APPARENTLY, THAT WAS EXPENSIVE SOFT-WARE.

THE DISK...

MORISATO-KUN... THE DISK...
YES!
SEVEN ELEVEN

...PLUS 4,500 YEN SALES TAX... OF COURSE.
THAT WILL BE 150,000 YEN...
WEL-COME, SIR.
-3¢
DOOM
DOOM
KETAN
DOOM
DOOM
I FORGOT !!!
IS IT TIME ...?
ALL DONE?
UH... YEAH...
KEIICHI ...?
I HAD TO GET HER THE 120,000 YEN ONE...


BELL-DANDY...
THE REASON I'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD...
IS...
I WANTED TO GIVE YOU THIS!
H-HAPPY ANNI-VERSARY !!
OH.
TH-THANK YOU. ♥
BUT...
WAIT A MINUTE...


I'M HERE ON EARTH TO *LIVE* WITH YOU...
...AND YOU WORK YOURSELF TO *DEATH*...
DON'T EVER...
...do that again.

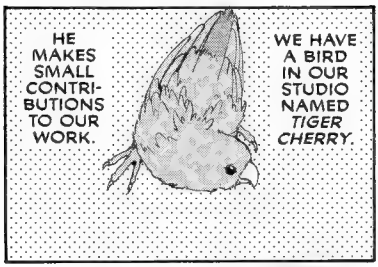
THE SHIELD

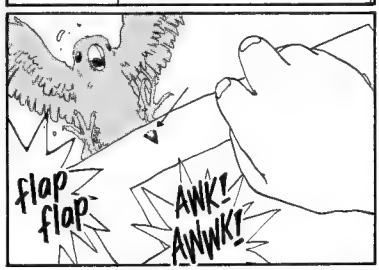
OH MY MANGA ART-IST!

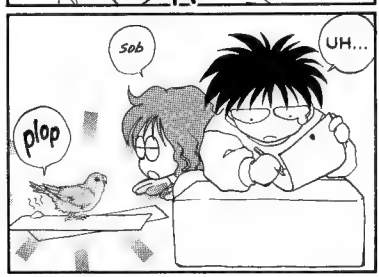
Goddess Side Story

STORY AND ART BY
KOSUKE FUJISHIMA
A Satan-Like Gentleman

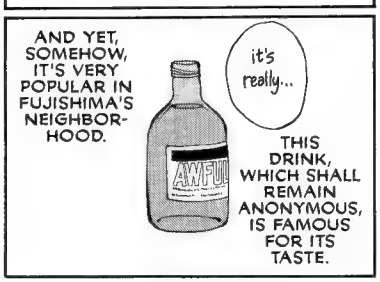
THE PAPER







THE TRAP


AND YET, SOMEHOW, IT'S VERY POPULAR IN FUJISHIMA'S NEIGHBORHOOD.
it's really...
AWFUL
THIS DRINK, WHICH SHALL REMAIN ANONYMOUS, IS FAMOUS FOR ITS TASTE.

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PUBLISHER
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English-language version
produced by Dark Horse Comics

OH MY GODDESS! Vol. 2
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This installment of "Letters to the Enchantress" is being sent to the designer while Vol. 1 is still newly arrived in stores. Between that and the holidays (it's January 3rd as I write this) we've received only one letter in response to date. Some may say that's a nice rationalization, but, after all, cynicism can never win the day in a manga such as *Oh My Goddess!*.

Dear Mr. Horn, (still without an "e")

Talk about your fast learning curves! Oh my. I'm highly impressed with the reissued TPB (which I've just finished reading for the third time). A highly commendable effort indeed. The color pages are great, the rest of the artwork clean, and so far the binding is tight **["So far"?—CGH]**. I'm very happy with your translation revisions. While no doubt there are plenty of nits left to pick (especially if you have read the original in Japanese, which I can't) I found your rewrites of the text to be excellent. All the more unfortunate passages seem to have been cleaned up remarkably well.

I especially like the Otaku's corner. That's a great idea! It solves the "providing background and explanation" problem without interrupting the story flow. I loved it (of course, I would) and I hope to see you extend it to the new releases as well.

I particularly liked how you reworked the Anime Mania sections; it's now clear that what Bell is dealing with in the kitchen is Sada's antagonism toward real women and annoyance at being interrupted in his obsession. Not to mention that doesn't appear to be Sada in her artist's rage montage—she's sensing the original animators' emotions direct from the laser disc, and then relating how they're affecting Sada.

By the way, while my nose is average-sized, I believe Garikin and Punpii are puppets from some TV show. I do know they appear again in the Valentine chocolates story **[Chapter 31, in Vol. 5—CGH]** as part of the montage Urd uses to convince Belldandy she must give Keiichi chocolates, or else he'll be branded a failure as a man.

I have a couple more questions, but I'll e-mail them latter.

A really great effort though.

—Timotheus

Timotheus promptly followed up:

Dear Mr. Horn,

A more reasoned response (I had more time.)

Again, let me say I'm very happy with the reissued volume one. I, personally, haven't found anything to complain about

with it after three intensive readings, and that's impressive. I really am enjoying your editorial comments section and hope you'll continue with it, both in the reissued books and in the new releases.

39.4: Garikin and Puupii. While my nose isn't large enough to know who (or what) they are, I've confirmed that Mr. Fujishima used them again in "Valentine Rhapsody." While the spelling in Dark Horse's English version is somewhat different (Garkson and Boopie), I'm pretty sure those are the same two puppets (or muppets). Hopefully that will help you identify them. They seem to be from some Japanese TV show and probably are a pair of antagonistic characters that are always at odds, based on the way they're being referenced.

103.2: Ding-Dong! Isn't there supposed to be a doorbell sound over Sayoko's head?

169.3: The rental agent. This is just my opinion (no actual knowledge), but the rental agent looks like the host character from some horror comic book (i.e. Uncle Creepy or the Old Gravedigger). I've always wondered if Mr. Fujishima wasn't referencing something or someone.

As I said before, I have a couple questions that can probably only be answered by someone with the original artwork. (I wonder who that could be?)

The first is mostly to annoy my wife. Even using a microscope the best I can get off the label of the soda bottle rattling around Keiichi's room in the first episode is "DR. P(h?)—." The rest is illegible. (The best view is in the scene where Belldandy is transferring K1's wish to the heavens. There's a Coke can next to it in the first panel, by the way.) If you could, can you let me know if that's a play on Dr Pepper? I know the brand is sold in Japan, and it's my wife's favorite soda. So I'd love to bug her about it being Keiichi's favorite too. (hee, hee)

The next question involves my file on internal dating of the stories. It appears the rental magazine Keiichi gives Megumi is dated for March (3/24), and the letter she gives Keiichi is postmarked for January. I was wondering if you could confirm these from your sources? (AKA—larger drawings) Thank you in advance.

Finally, I was wondering if you had an answer to my earlier question about whether you thought it might be possible to reprint the background articles about translating the series into English and Mr. Fujishima's career that Studio Proteus (or someone) had printed in the early issues. They used to be available on the Studio Proteus website, but that appears to have disappeared and unfortunately it seems no one in our group of otaku (or is that otaki?) printed them out or saved copies of them.

Hope this isn't too annoying a series of requests, thank you for your time, and again, an excellent job on reissue number one.

—Timotheus

An obsessed *OMG!* reader and an obsessed *OMG!* editor. Like Keiichi and Belldandy, it's a match made in heaven. "K1," by the way, is a nickname for Keiichi, as "ichi" means one.

I don't know that any passages in the original English version of *Oh My Goddess!* Vol. 1 were "unfortunate"—as I've said, it's the version that is the foundation of Dark Horse's longest-running manga series. As per your request to reprint the original Studio Proteus articles on the adaptation of *OMG!* (see below), it was a project SP approached with consideration and care. In fact as thus far I've edited only two new

volumes in the series (as opposed to the first 20 from SP), the Dark Horse version of *Oh My Goddess!* remains essentially the Studio Proteus version. What I am doing here is more in the nature of a gloss, but it is SP's work that gives me the opportunity to do so.

Blowing up the digital file on Vol. 1, page 14, panel 1, the label on the bottle appears to say "Dr. Ph Mart(u)rs" which suggests to me something different from a play on "Dr. Pepper," but I'm not sure what. The dates you mention may be reconciled on the grounds of two ideas: Megumi said the letter was returned to sender (as it had been addressed to the dorm from which K1 had been ejected), so presumably when she hand-delivered the letter to Keiichi, it was several weeks after its original mailing, and magazines habitually carry a cover date one or two months ahead of the month in which they actually appear. Splitting the difference, I would guess the scene might take place in February (the story, however, originally appeared in the April 1989 issue of *Afternoon*).

I think you're right about the identity of Garikin and Puupii, although we still don't know the show Fujishima is (presumably) making reference to. The only such Japanese show I've ever seen was indirectly—*Hyokkori Hyotanjima*—in Isao Takahata's *Only Yesterday* (one of the very best anime films ever made, if you haven't seen it). The experience called to mind Ren explaining to Stimpy that "cartoons aren't real—they're . . . they're puppets!"

You are also right about the mysterious missing doorbell sound FX; it's very Zen of you, to notice something in its absence. So as to not let this blank space go to waste, readers are encouraged to use it as an overflow area for yearbook sig-natures—"I'll never forget homeroom," "Have a bitchin' summer," that sort of thing. As for the rental agent, my feeling is that he's just a caricature of a mysterious old man, but Mr. Fujishima (especially in these early volumes) enjoys in-jokes so much it can't be ruled out.

In fact, Vol. 2 has so many in-jokes I'm keenly aware of a sense that however much I'm getting, there's much more I'm not getting. That's why "Letters to the Enchantress" is an interactive feature, even around Dark Horse itself. Michael Gombos and Riko Frohnmayer of Sales & Marketing are to be thanked for providing additional input—M. Gombos points out that Vol. 1's note for 113.6 should say *furikake* instead of *furitake* ("furikake" means "shake and add"—this is one of the many *furi* that inform the meaning of Gainax's anime *FLCL*), and that in the note for 151.1, the second listing of Rina Ayukawa's name is misspelled as "Risa."

By request, below is a reprinting of a September 1994 essay by Toren Smith that explains the reasoning behind the rendition in English of several of *OMG!'s* characters, as well as the title of the manga itself. As you will see, several issues are involved, one of them being the issue of "transliteration." Transliteration concerns the question: how do you spell out in English, which uses the Roman alphabet, a name or term from a language that uses a different way of writing?

This is an issue not only for Japanese but the many languages that use other scripts—Greek, Russian, Hebrew, and Arabic, to name only four. Taking a prominent example, whereas Americans and the British spell the name of the country as "Iraq," the French and Spanish spell it as "Irak." You can see that both versions are trying to describe the pronunciation of a word that Iraqis themselves, after all, write in Arabic script.

For the most part, spelling within Japanese is very regular compared to

English—like English, Japanese has five vowel sounds, but unlike English, these vowels are always pronounced the same way in any given word. Transliteration of "native" Japanese words into the Roman alphabet is fairly standardized, with some minor variations seen. Where the big difficulties come up is in trying to transliterate an "imported" term or name out of a Japanese work.

If it's not an English word but one written in another language using the Roman alphabet (let's say, a personal name in Polish or the name of a town in Germany), the translator has to first figure out what the pronunciation of the word was in its original language, because it is that pronunciation the Japanese likely tried to represent. It gets even more complicated in a case such as Toren describes below, where Mr. Fujishima used names for the Goddesses that in one stage of their original language (in this case, Anglo-Saxon, also known as Old English—not the malt liquor, but English as it existed between c. 450 AD and c. 1200 AD) were written using characters not in today's alphabet, as you will observe.

Fortunately, Toren Smith was the man for the job, as he is a genuine scholar in addition to his essential role behind bringing about what you are reading now—as president of Studio Proteus, he personally licensed and oversaw the adaptation of almost all manga published by Dark Horse prior to 2004, including, of course, *Oh My Goddess!*.

We'll have more on the background to *OMG!*'s first arrival in the U.S. in Vol. 3. But, briefly, the Studio Proteus/Dark Horse version of the *OMG!* manga began as a monthly comic-book series in August of 1994. This series premiered in concert with AnimEigo's release of the original, five-volume anime adaptation, the first volume of which hit U.S. stores in June of that same year (this original series, which, like the current TV show, was directed by Hiroaki Gohda, is reported as planned for re-release by AnimEigo for the late spring or early summer of this year—watch www.animeigo.com for further news).

This essay appeared in the second, September 1994 issue of *Oh My Goddess!*—which also contained the second installment of "Letters to the Enchantress." This column, in fact, is itself a continuation from the original English edition of the manga.

When fans ask how to become a translator, the usual reply is to tell them to crack those Japanese textbooks and get studying. Some translators are on the ball enough to encourage the eager student to learn to write well in English, too, since that is your end product. But I've never heard anyone tell them that they need to know something about practically everything known to man.

Sound absurd? Unfortunately, as someone who's worked on plenty of Shirow material, I can assure you it is not. Masamune Shirow (especially in his text pieces) displays a far-ranging knowledge of, well, just about everything. One moment the intricacies of Tantric Buddhism, the next the cutting edge of high-energy physics, the next insect bio-logy. Hisashi Sakaguchi's *Version* had me delving into the latest research on electro-organic logic circuitry, and even the usually straightforward Johji Manabe (*Caravan Kidd, Drakuun*) sent me scuttling to my West Point history of World War II to track down the proper spellings for the names of obscure German armor commanders. My experience with *Oh My Goddess!* is a case in point, and perhaps provides a window into less-obvious aspects of translating.

The title was no problem, since it was an obvious play on the Japanese manga

artists' propensity to have English-speaking foreigners say "Oh my god!" during any moment of surprise or stress. The peculiar transliteration previously used in Japan ("Ah my goddess") was dropped after we confirmed with Fujishima that our understanding of his intent was correct. He also confirmed that the lead characters were named after Norse mythological figures, but warned that his treatment of the Norse mythos was, in his words, "extremely loose" (similar to Shirow's random and inconsistent use of Greek mythology in *Appleseed*). Regardless, the romanization of the characters' names was going to take some care, and I blithely set to work. Little did I know what a nest of horrors I was diving into . . .

[Editor's comment: Even more specifically, the expression "Oh My God!," as used in manga, often gets written out in English with a highly unnatural stress added to the first word, so an English-speaking foreigner would be shown saying the phrase as "Oh! My God!" This is why the first word of the Japanese title ends with a small hiragana (phonetic symbol written cursive style) "tsu." Such a symbol is used in Japanese to show a sudden, abrupt end to a sound. You see it all the time at the end of manga sound FX, although the "tsu," like the FX itself, is more likely to be written as katakana (the same set of phonetic symbols, but written block style)—CGH]

In Norse mythology the Norns (sometimes called the Disir) were three female deities whose spinning and weaving determined the fates of humans and gods alike. Analogous to the fates (sometimes called the Moiriai) of Greek and Roman mythology—Clotho, Atropos, and Lacheses—they were guardians of Urda's well, which watered the roots of Yggdrasil **[in Norse mythology, the great tree which mystically underlies the various worlds of existence; in *OMG!*, the computer system which does the same—CGH]** that extended into Asgard. In some myths, the Norns are described as three giantesses, in others as giantess, an elf, and a dwarf. Often one of them negated the gifts of the other two or turned them into a curse. Urd represented the past, Verdandi the present, and Skuld the future.

Okay, no problem—based on the information I had, the original Japanese spellings *Berudandei* and *Urudo* would be romanized as "Verdandi" and "Urd." Wait a second . . . what's this? "Many aspects of Norse myths are vague and contradictory including accepted spellings." Uh-oh. For example, Urd also shows up as "Urd," "Urda," "Urth," and "Urthr." From my study (finally pays off!) of Anglo-Saxon (AKA Old English), I thought these changes and corruptions may have evolved due to misreadings of the character "eth," ð in lower case, Ð in upper, but pronounced as "th," common in Old English and still used in some Scandinavian languages. I figured Urd was probably originally spelled as Urð, Verdandi as Verðande. This means that the proper pronunciations of Verdandi and Urd very probably were Ver*th*ande and Ur*th*.

Time to call the big guns. I phoned Professor Amory **[Dr. Frederic Amory, then at the University of San Franciso—CGH]** (he's the man when it comes to Anglo-Saxon and Old Icelandic). Professor Amory was most forthcoming, not only with the linguistic information, but some essential background on the mythology.

The Norns, it seems, were fairly recent additions to the pantheon. They're not part of the original Old Gods (such as Thor and Loki), but are late inventions, and reflect the fatalism of the Scandinavian people. Their names are not names as such, but in fact only "speaking names," or descriptions of their functions. *Verdandi* was a verb form

of the Old Scandinavian word "Vertha," "to become." Likewise, *urdr* meant "what has happened," and *skuld* "what shall be," or "what shall come to pass." These words were used in regular conversation, and survived as root words in English and German, and are virtually unchanged in some of the Scandinavian languages. The English word "weird" comes from Old Norse "urth-r" by way of the Old English "wyrd." Professor Amory confirmed the original spellings and the proper pronunciation of the names is "Verthandi" and "Urthr."

So now I have a dilemma. Technically, a proper and complete translation of the names would be Verthandi, Urtht, and Skuld (at least one out of three words survive unchanged!), but I was concerned that such a large change (despite its inarguable accuracy) might cause unrest among the fans. I discussed this at length with Kodansha, Fujishima, and Robert Woodhead at AnimEigo (since he was facing the same problem with his subtitled video release). The upshot was since Fujishima was playing if fast and loose with the mythos in general, no harm would be done by sticking with his preferred transliteration, Belldandy—despite the huge change from the proper Verthandi. Urd was a less of a problem, "Urd" being an accepted alternate spelling. And of curse Skuld worked out just fine.

Then we hit "Mara" **[a female demon who first shows up in Vol. 4, and who is in the current Vol. 22—CGH]**. In its original Japanese spelling it is Maaraa, but it had previously been bizarrely translated as "Marller." Again, since the character was obviously based on a combination of the Mara of Buddhist religion (sometimes called the Buddhist Satan) and Mara the "arch-tempter" of Hindu mythology, we decided to go with "Mara." The Hindu Mara (also known as the God of Illusion) has three daughters: Rati (desire), Raga (pleasure), and Tanha (restlessness), who also attempted to dissuade the Buddha from attaining his enlightenment. The Buddhist Mara leads an army of demons, depicted in Buddhist art as hideous monsters similar to the devils that torment the damned in medieval European portrayals of hell. These demons, a common subject of Tibetan iconography, were originally native spirits connected with the shamanistic Bon religion of pre-Buddhist Tibet, who have been tamed by the power of the Buddhist saints.

I hope this will give some indication of the work that is often necessary to translate these comics properly, and the effort that is often expended to see that it is done correctly. Decisions are never made lightly, and the opinions of the fans are always solicited. If you have any comments or information to add please feel free to write. And for those of you who would like to delve deeper into the Norse mythology, I'd like to recommend the book by Stallybrass available form Dover, and Jacob Graham's *Germanic Mythology*. Also, Mitchell and Robinson's *Guide to Old English* has been an essential reference work for me for years, and the fifth edition is widely available.

What Toren said in 1994 still holds true today, especially the part about feeling free to write. ^_^ And now let's get into the footnotes.

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY ON VOL. 2:

6.5: "Penny" is used here as a figure of speech. Although this practice might be thought universal, Japanese apparently don't use nicknames for their common coins like our "penny," "nickel," "dime," and "quarter," instead just referring to them by the amount—the 1-yen coin, the 5-yen

coin, etc.

30.1: Maybe it's the 1980s origin of the manga, but I keep thinking of Matthew Broderick as playing Keiichi back in the day, although his brooding has elements of Michael J. Fox.

50.5: The guy in that privileged spot beneath Tamiya's armpit is Jimsy, a character from the 1978 anime TV show directed by Hayao Miyazaki, *Mirai Shonen Conan* (*Future Boy Conan*). Basically, it's like *Waterworld*, but cool (the *Conan* TV show is an adaptation of the novel *The Incredible Tide* by Alexander Key, better known for his book-turned-Disney movie *Escape to Witch Mountain*). *Future Boy Conan* has been shown just about everywhere on Earth (including Iraq/Irak, something of a center for Arabic anime dubbing in the 1970s) except in English-language broadcast. Some in the United States have been lucky enough to catch the Spanish version *Conan, el Niño del Futuro* on cable systems carrying the Mexican network Televisa.

Although most of Hayao Miyazaki's work in the 1970s was in television, the shortcuts and cheapness that TV anime (with its low budgets and weekly production schedule) entails always bothered him as an artist, and once he finally got the chance to start directing feature films where he could take more care, he rarely returned to television. Some of his early 1980s TV work is in official release on English-language home video, including the six Miyazaki-directed episodes out of the 26-episode series *Meitantei Holmes* (*Famous Detective Holmes*) dubbed in English as *Sherlock Hound*. Geneon has this show available as a six-volume DVD edition; the Miyazaki-directed episodes are to be found among those on the first three discs (called "Case Files") in the series.

You may also be able to find the 1995 Streamline VHS release *Lupin III: Greatest Capers*, containing the two Miyazaki-directed episodes from the 1977-1980 anime TV series; this is the same series currently in DVD release from Geneon under the title *Lupin the 3rd*, but as these episodes are #145 and #155, it may take a while for them to come out on disc. Now is the time to admit that during my period of fan subtitling, the first work produced was that aforementioned episode #145, "Albatross, The Wings of Death." This was in the summer of 1987, before there were established programs for subtitling and, needless to say, before there were home digital recording formats.

Fortunately, a brilliant classmate (every high school anime needs the "genius" character), Iain McClatchie, wrote a subtitling program—maybe the first one ever outside a dedicated device or studio—to do it on his Amiga 500; the computer was only used to imprint the titles as the signal made its way through to a VCR to be recorded.

There was no time for debugging before the date I had promised to show the episode at TimeCon '87. In those days there were no anime cons *per se*, so what you did was bum rush a SF or gaming con and run an anime room there. Toren Smith was a tremendous inspiration for me there, too—not only did he produce increasingly sophisticated program books for his anime rooms in the mid-80s (the books were needed as, again, very little anime was available subtitled then), but he would brainwash the con attendees by putting a tape loop of trailers on a monitor just outside the dealer's room. Pretty soon everyone at these SF cons was forgetting about that *Star Trek* jive and getting with the program—the anime program. Anyway, the end result was that we couldn't figure out how to get rid of the white screen border, and the subtitles them-

selves were just the default Amiga screen characters—i.e., 12-point type, and, yes, left-justified. But it was subtitled as promised—thank God for video projectors, or no one would have been able to make out a single word.

54.1: Now, mysteriously, Etsushi Otaki has the last name (and they are spelled using the same kanji) as Keiichi's funny, funny senior, but we are told nothing about their actually being related, which, of course, they may simply not be.

97.3: Four years later, when this scene was first animated (in episode two of the abovementioned five-episode original *OMG!* anime) the VHS tape mysteriously became a Beta, Sony's rival format to VHS that by 1993 was already ten years past its prime. Like the LD player (see Vol. 1's notes for 37.5) the Beta became associated with otaku; Tanaka uses one to take control of Kubo's mind in *Otaku no Video*. The above-mentioned fan subtitling projects were all mastered to the even more marginal SuperBeta format. Not my own player, though; you'll notice I had a record of using other people's equipment, a tradition which continues to this day—I must be the only otaku who doesn't even own a TV.

101.4: The upper crate is full of refreshing acetylene—it seems that just like Otaki, Kei-chan dabbles in a little welding. The lower crate bears a "Aa" in its top right corner (the same the Aa that's the first word of the Japanese titles of both the *OMG!* manga and this particular chapter) mysterious label of *Torikaeshi no tsukanai koto*-brand chips, meaning "You can't take back what you did." Is this a reference to 119.2?

104.5: The original English version used "sysop" rather than this version's "sysadmin," although the term "sysop" was in fact more common in use at the time this story was written.

110.3: Urd is asking him to get out because in Japan, you do your scrubbing outside the bath, and then get into the bath clean to relax. Of course, presumably Keiichi already scrubbed his own back (with that technological innovation known as a "brush") but Urd isn't really interested in such details.

115.1: Sleipnir is another instance of Fujishima-san's use of Norse myth, in which this eight-legged steed was ridden by Odin, who was both the head of the Norse pantheon and a God-awful anime released through Central Park Media.

127-128: Sayoko's measurements round out (huh-huh-huh) to 33-23-33 and 5'4", and Urd's to 35-24-36, 5'5". They may seem taller to you, but that comes from hanging around Keiichi.

127.3: This text, white on a light background, is easy to miss in the original, and in fact appears here for the first time in English. In the original Japanese, the man said "*motteke dorobo!*", which has the sense of "Go on, take it, you thief!" in Edokko dialect, that of the native-born Tokyo working class (as Cockney to BBC English, not necessarily "refined"-sounding NHK Japanese, even though both come from the capital). The girl he's talking to has just scored an upset victory in the traditional festival game of *kingyo-sukui*, "save the goldfish," where you try to catch a little goldfish from a pond with a flimsy scoop whose paper net rapidly disintegrates in water (you then get to take it home in a plastic bag of water as a pet). This student, on the other hand, has managed to score

a huge goldfish of the type, which would never be stocked, let alone caught, in such a game. In 147.3, Urd has managed a similar sting on a guy running an equally unlikely variant of the game with sea slugs.

132.2: Jimsy from *Conan* again. Naturally, Fujishima would have one of the show's stranger characters hanging about the Nekomi Motor Club, not its hero or heroine.

134.2: I've seen the image of tiger vs. dragon in two women facing off in the manga *Flowers & Bees* by Moyoco Anno (also author of *Sugar Sugar Rune* and *Happy Mania*).

136.3: In the original Japanese, the writing behind Bell and Urd's heads said *yoyu*. This is an expression which indicates a relaxed, rested posture, ready to deal with what might come next (as opposed to being ready for something by being all keyed-up). If someone asks you how you're doing, you might answer "yoyu, yoyu" to suggest you're feeling calm and composed.

137.5: The guy behind Sayoko is luring that youth into a strip show.

137.6: He's wearing a WWII German army uniform: Wehrmacht great coat and *Feldmutze* side cap.

142.1: The sign to the left of the balloons is protesting a tuition increase (but see below).

142.3: She's wearing L.A. Gear? This Bush Sr. stuff is too much. What's next, Side Ones? Dark Horse tends to take note of these details, as Portland's biggest industries are comics, manga, and athletic shoes. Actually, in 69.2, I see Keiichi's wearing them, too. I thought he was a poor student who couldn't afford designer clothing. My guess is that divine sweatshop called Belldandy made it for him.

143.3: In the original Japanese, Urd said *rakkii!*—"lucky!" an English word the Japanese took up as a phrase, like Asuka's *chansu!*—"(now's my) chance!" in episode 8 of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*.

144.1-4: Yoshida Sensha is a cartoonist still active today; the joke is that she keeps getting middle sections of the photo that look like Sensha's characters.

Like *Azumanga Daioh* (and yet, strangely unlike), his approach is the yon-koma or four-panel gag strip. His (Japanese-language) home-page is at http://www.1101.com/sensha/

152: It is surely a mark of Belldandy's graciousness that she didn't get mad at Keiichi for not immediately remembering their anniversary. In a relationship this is sometimes broken down into individual month-y-versaries, each of which must be remembered through mental clockwork on pain of emotional upset (surely the fact the relationship has lasted to this point can be taken as *prima facie* evidence of the commitment of the other). Somehow the enthusiasm to mark these anniversaries takes a rapid fade after the relationship is over, the way no one really bothers to observe Armistice Day any more.

155.4: I don't believe we've seen that Urd and Megumi were actually introduced—she just sort of drops by as usual. But Keiichi's sister is fairly laid back about the facts (or deceptions) of his lifestyle.

159.2: Keiichi said *ja nai* in the original, which more or less does mean "not."

The phrase *nanchatte* was also translated as "not" in "Otaku no Video." "Not!" is often associated with the early-'90s *SNL* sketch-turned-movie *Wayne's World*, but I first heard it from Anthrax in their 1987 rap-metal "I'm The Man." It's perhaps a small-to-medium-sized stretch to say that a student who listened to Van Halen (see Vol. 1, 138.1) might also listen to Anthrax—they had toured Japan most recently in February of 1988, and were always fairly popular there. The band itself has remarked that as a Brooklyn street saying, it goes back to the 1970s.

160.4: At the end of 1989 the exchange rate was about 146 yen to the dollar, so hence just over $1000 U.S. However, with inflation that'd be about $1500 today, if you would like to put yourself through as close an experience as possible.

160.7: In the original Japanese, Keiichi says that it's enough to by a Super-VHS player—a format which had only come on the market two years before, and which, like SuperBeta, never really caught on except among otaku, and which, like SuperBeta, I have tapes of but no machine to play them. We're talking about AMVs from the first Clinton administration, and off-air Japanese tapes of *KareKano* and *The Simpsons* from the second—Marge sounds strangely alluring in Japanese.

165.1: What bugs me is that the robot on the left, the one with the samurai haircut, is another one of Mr. Fujishima's in-jokes, and I don't know what it means.

165.3: In Japan, you see people doing things that would not be thought strictly necessary; like pressing the buttons for you in an elevator, or polishing all the fire extinguishers in a building. The traffic wardens can get a little excessive, perhaps. One time at night there was this detour where the sidewalk passed by a construction site. The detour, extending out into the road, was marked off by awesome traffic cones lit from within, giving even this humble setting that cyberpunk, *Akira* look that is your birthright on a Tokyo evening (Tokyo is no great shakes by day—it lacks the great urban architecture of a Chicago or Paris—but it is the most beautiful city in the world by night). But at each and every bend of this detour was a guy looking like Keiichi there, waving his lightsaber in the direction you were supposed to turn next (which was, of course, already clearly indicated by the lit-up traffic cones). I suppose an extra layer of safety can't hurt, and it helps to boost employment.

171.4: Poor Keiichi; if it was a CD-ROM, he just could have wiped it off. That's all right—in a few more years, it will be.

172.2: The notion of paying sales tax was still relatively new in Japan at the time this story appeared (December 1989)—it was first introduced at a rate of 3% on April Fools' Day, 1988. Exactly nine years later it got raised to 5%, where it remains today. Of course, in Oregon, where this edition is produced, you can buy *Oh My Goddess!* Vol. 2 without sales tax—insert Nelson's "ha-ha" laugh here.

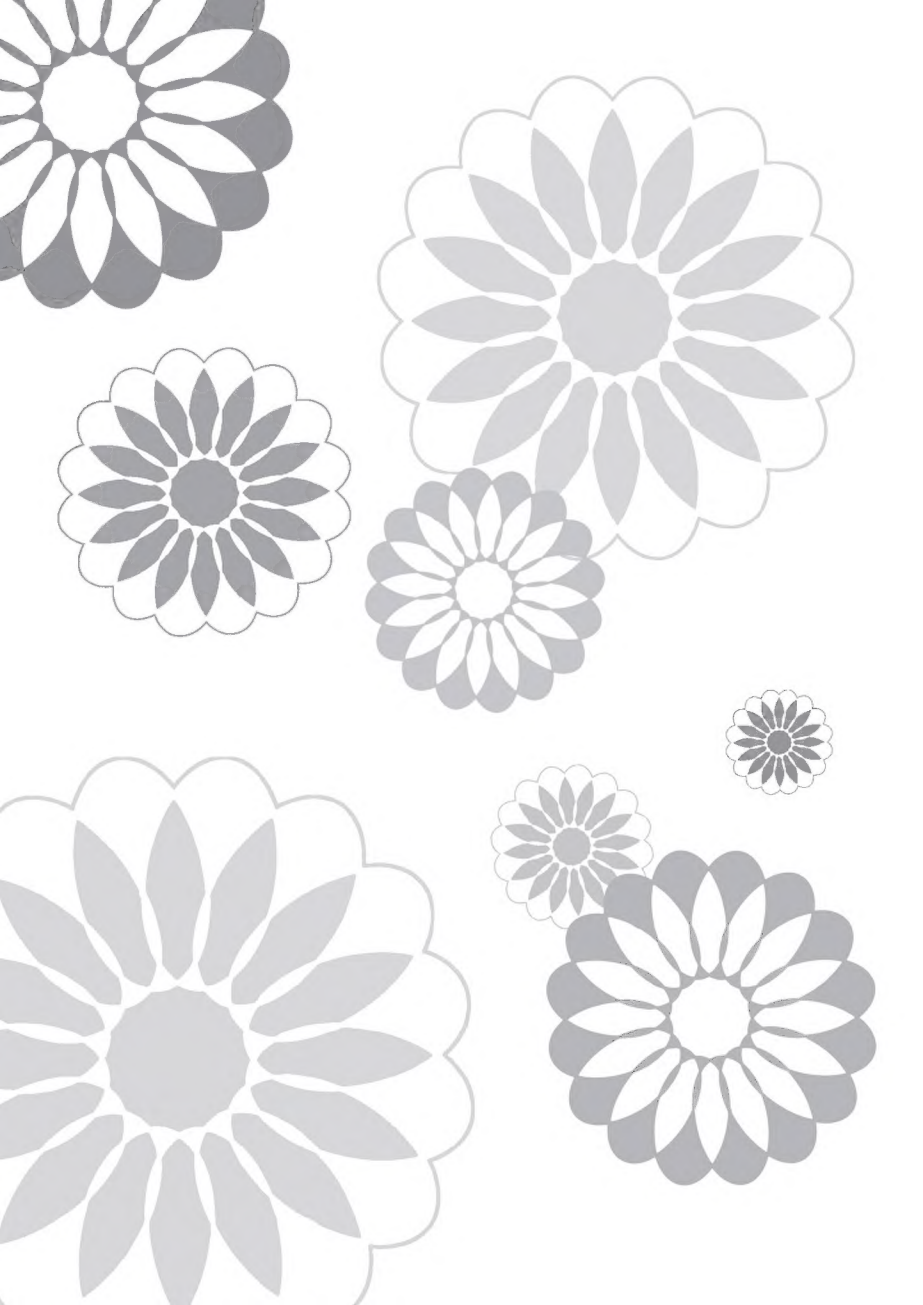
Well, that's all for now, and you can rest assured there will be no more reminiscences about the 1980s in Vol. 3. That is when the reminiscences about the 90s begin. One more thing—I know it's terribly inappropriate, but I edited this section of the book while listening to Three 6 Mafia's *Most Known Hits*, repeatedly.

—CGH

Creator Kosuke Fujishima in 1990!

His message to fans in the original Japanese *Oh My Goddess!* Vol. 2:

"For all those who read Volume 1 and sent in letters about it, I really, really thank you. But I regret that even now, my lifestyle remains that of a shut-in. Out of neglect, my car is rotting. My motorcycle is rotting. My bike is rotting. My body is rotting. For those of you who would like to help, please keep sending letters of encouragement—Oh my readers!"



MANGA/HUMOR

Oh My Goddess! 2

ああっ女神さまっ

NOW THAT KEIICHI AND THE

goddess in his life are the hot item on campus, they find themselves constantly putting out fires—mostly set by Keiichi's buddies in the N.I.T. Motor Club, who gently requisition his monthly living budget, make him test-ride a monster funnybike, and toss him on a beach retreat like so much volleyball. After all this, Keiichi just wants to relax and watch some home video... except this video (literally) introduces a second goddess into his life—Belldandy's "sophisticated" older sister, Urd!

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